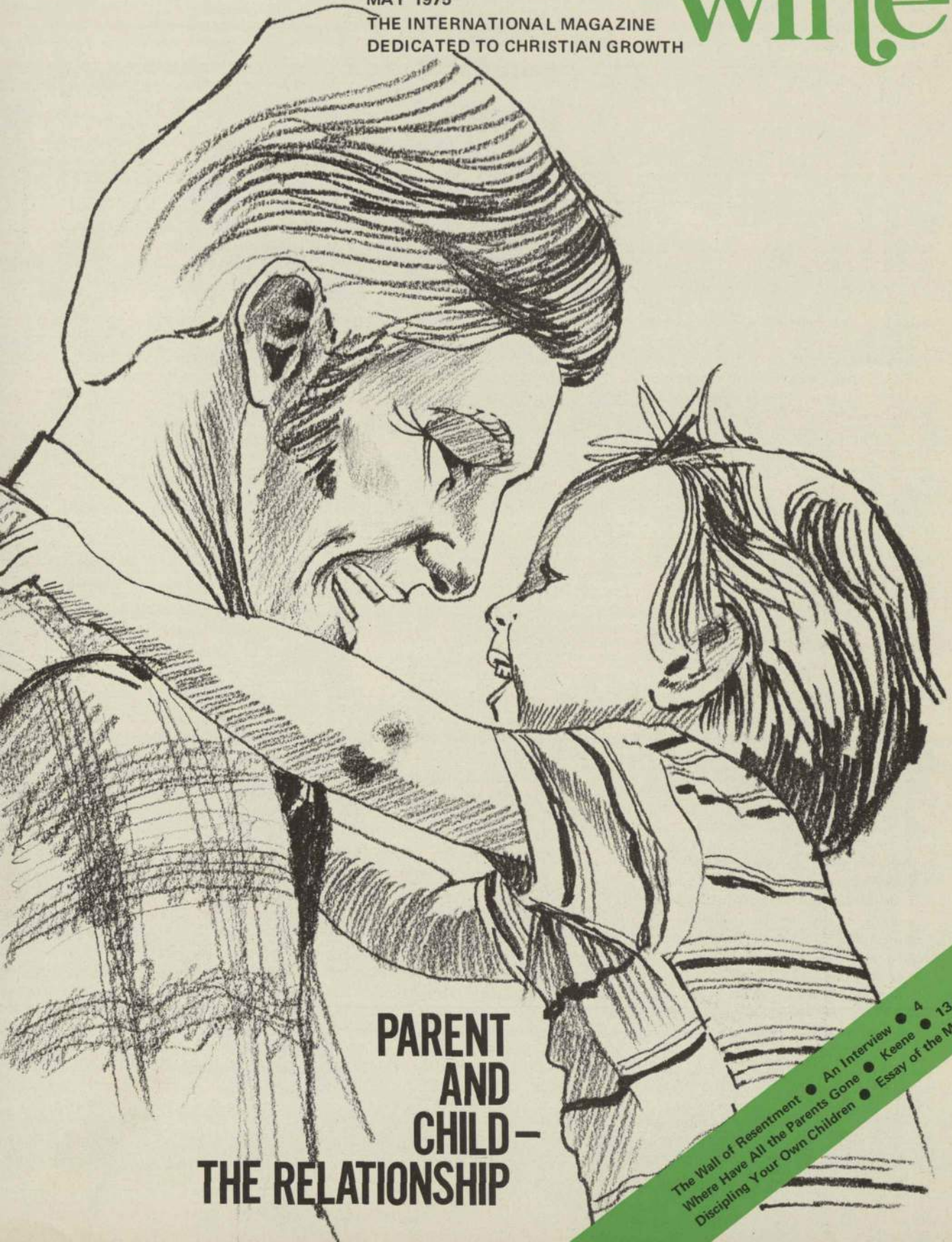




new wine

MAY 1975

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE
DEDICATED TO CHRISTIAN GROWTH



PARENT AND CHILD— THE RELATIONSHIP

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SPIRIT OF LIBERATION

I am a 20-year-old Christian girl, baptized in the Holy Spirit and would like to share my experience with you.

About one year ago I began to be interested in police work and considered perhaps it could be God's will for my life to be in this line of work. As I looked into it, I found I not only was interested in becoming a policewoman, but any job not meant for a woman fascinated me. I found I didn't want to be a nurse, but a doctor; not a legal secretary, but a lawyer. I work on an assembly line but I found myself wishing instead I could be able to drive a fork truck and stock the line, which are both men's jobs. Any area dominated by men caught my attention.

It was at this time a special was shown on television about women. It dealt with "women's rights," and how "liberated" they were becoming. As I watched this, I felt this desire in me to become as a man. I began to ignore what God's Word had to say about my intended position and instead decided if I were married, I would assume the position under a man, but as long as I was a young, single, working girl, I would pursue any career I wanted.

I had become deceived, believing it was God's will for me to become a policeman, and I even looked into karate and judo lessons so if the occasion arose, no man would be able to dominate me.

After seeing another special on television, "A Case of Rape," I was furious about the injustice done to women by men and didn't care whom I told about it.

My Christian friends knew my heart and life wasn't in line with the Scriptures, and they were constantly praying about my "stubbornness." God began to deal with me. I had received deliverance before and I began to realize a further need for deliverance. I submitted myself to my brothers and sisters for this ministry. They spoke to this spirit, which none of us knew what to call, and said, "The spirit wanting to be equal with man, what is your name?" This spirit spoke out of me saying, "Jesus could just as easily have been a woman as a man!" After further commands, the spirit identified itself as a *spirit of liberation*.

Never before had we heard of this, but because of the situation with Women's Lib, I wanted to share this with you so you could possibly share it with other Christian women who are being deceived. I've found it is possible for me to be liberated, and I have experienced liberation given to me by the power of God. I can now take my rightful place under my authorities and I have learned to submit myself to other people. Please share my experience for the glory of God so other people can be set free.

Kathy Springer
Quincy, Illinois

Letters to Editor

"HOUSECLEANING" COMMENTS

I have just read "Spiritual Housecleaning" [March] by Charles Finney. It was such a timely article for me because God has been preparing my heart for a revival by showing me all the fallow ground in my life.

Kathy Dirks

I especially enjoyed the article, "Spiritual Housecleaning." It was as timeless as if they were written today. Its outline was excellent and caused me to search myself on each of the issues.

R. Zimmer
Berlin, N.J.

I was really disturbed by "Spiritual Housecleaning." It was too legalistic — a sharp contrast to other viewpoints given in the magazine.

Bill Benson
Sioux Falls, S.D.

I was disappointed to find among your otherwise excellent articles, an essay by Charles Finney entitled, "Spiritual Housecleaning." Though it was written over 100 years ago, the essayist did not support any of his statements, and he had no biblical basis for his opinions. His entire article could very much become a stumbling block to new and old Christians alike. More and more articles such as these will lessen the credibility of your beautiful magazine.

Marypaul Magura
New Concord, Ohio

MOUNTAIN TOPS & VALLEYS

"Maintaining a Life of Worship" [January 1975] meant a lot to me. So much of the time people are willing to share their "mountain top" experiences and how good God has been to them, but we hear very little of people experiencing the "valley" and the importance of being steadfast to Him and His Word in those times. This article was encouraging in pointing out that I am not alone when I experience a "valley" and to be thankful to God.

Guytri D. Budhai
Dominican Republic

BREATHING ROOM

As I was reading the March issue of *New Wine*, I came across Bob Mumford's article entitled, "Breathing Room." For me, that was a beautiful example of the Gospel message. The entire concept of "breathing room" allows for the ministry of the Holy Spirit, God's timing and God's ways, and the growth in the fruits of the Spirit. All in all, it was a welcome and refreshing change from many theologies and teachings that seem to wander into the law, and exclude the Gospel.

J. Michael Nace
Springfield, Ohio

SOUND OFF!

I like Echoes of the Spirit, but please do not become a news magazine. There are too many of those already!

Daniel Goering
Washington, D.C.

Believe it or not — editorial always blesses me and gets me more in line with what Jesus wants from me.

Donna Camilleri
Manchester, Conn.

I think there is too much emphasis on shepherdship. Even though it may be a valid doctrine, it is not an instant means to holiness. Some groups seem to be putting more value on shepherdship than on the lordship of Jesus.

Alic Gernazian
Atlanta, Ga.

Your magazine is so very much needed to keep in balance some of the teachings in the charismatic movement.

Guyla Camden

I like the single-theme unity of each issue.

Lawrence M. Compter
Westwood, N.J.

I don't really care for your way of making your magazine all on one subject. A variety is good — after all, generally one or two people cover a subject really well.

Mrs. Clarice Davenport
British Columbia

Editorial

As God has been dealing with us about husband and wife relationships and the responsibility that each has to the other, there has naturally come about a concern for the responsibility we have as parents to our children. Over the past several months questions concerning raising children have been so numerous we felt the necessity of publishing an issue dealing with the relationship of parents and children.

There are no simple "ABC's" of child raising, but there are principles God has given which, if properly understood and applied with love, will definitely bring forth the desired fruit.

Proverbs 22:6 tells us that if we "train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it" (NAS). Most of us have not realized that we teach and train a child more by what we *are* than by what we *say*. Almost every parent has had the sobering experience of having one of his well-hidden sins pop up unexpectedly in one of his children. We are learning that even beyond what our children learn to do by imitating us, what we *are* can be imparted to our children. That includes those things we have learned to hide from each other — the self-centeredness, the rebellion, the stubbornness, etc. When we see how much we teach our children to act and respond by what we are, the seriousness of our responsibility as parents becomes even greater.

Our primary responsibility as parents, then, is to bring our own lives into conformity with the Spirit of Christ and live godly lives before our children. In this manner we will properly train them, not only by word but by example, that when they are old they will not depart from those things they learned when they were with us.



new
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MAGAZINE

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READER SERVICE CARD

Our reader service card is now included on the inserted envelope. For change of address or new names please refer to this envelope.



The following interview with a young Christian woman was recently conducted by Dick Leggatt, New Wine staff member. In discussing her family experiences, personal information of a revealing nature was shared, and for this reason, she wishes to remain anonymous.

1) Could you share a little of your family background before you became a Christian?

When I was six, my mother divorced my real father, and she remarried a year later to my stepfather. We lived in Washington, and my mother and

stepfather socialized quite a bit at local resorts and clubs, and because they were gone constantly, we had to live with a housekeeper. Growing up that way, I became very detached from my mom and dad, and I never really knew them or felt very close to either of them.

From Washington, we moved to Kansas and lived there for about five years. In Kansas, we experienced great financial difficulty, and after losing everything in his business, my stepfather took a job in Florida, and we moved here a few years ago. His new job was as a salesman, and that kept him out on the road much of the time.

2) What was your exposure to religion or the church while you were growing up?

My stepfather was Catholic, and for awhile my parents would pack us all up and send us to Mass. But it was in Latin, so I couldn't understand it. Still, for some reason, I would keep after my parents to take me to church, even though it was always so cold and dead when we got there that I wondered why I had wanted to go. I had a love for God in my heart, but I didn't know how to apply it or what it meant.

But then, after we left Kansas, God started to intervene in our family.

During our move to Florida, my mother had to return to Kansas for a month because a relative had gone into a coma, and while she was there, she accepted the Lord. The first Sunday after she came back to Florida, she took us to the Baptist Church, and I didn't like it at all. So we tried another church, and at the morning service, the words that the pastor spoke went right through my heart. We went back to the evening service, and that night I gave my heart to the Lord. That was in August of the same year we moved to Florida, and I was 15 at the time. Within a month, my two brothers also were saved.

3) What were some of the specific problems you were coming out of when you met the Lord? Did you consider yourself a good person before you came to Jesus?

No, I couldn't stand myself. Part of the reason was because of the things I was exposed to in my family. Because my family was always free to talk around me, I knew all my aunts' and uncles' problems as well as my own family's, and all those problems that I knew about made me feel awful, because I was related to all of them.

As far as my own life went, I didn't get into drugs or anything, because I was in a town where drugs were not readily available. Also, I received the Lord before I ran into any of that, which really helped.

But the main problems I faced were family situations. After my parents' divorce when I was six, my real father would have nothing at all to do with us, and I had felt tremendously rejected by him. So, when my mother remarried, I turned to my stepfather, and I idolized him. I was still very young, and he became my whole world. But then as I got a little older, I started seeing a lot of things in my mother and father's marriage that weren't right. My stepfather did some things which deeply hurt my mother, and I saw my mother go to pieces. Things like this started putting a wall between me and him, and I didn't trust him because he was hurting my mother.

I also saw him go to pieces. He almost had a nervous breakdown. He began to drink a lot, and in my eyes, he just became a bum. Resentment started building up, and the love I had had for him as a little girl started changing. I couldn't stand him, and I couldn't see why my mother loved him. Every chance I got, I would impart to him that I couldn't stand him, and because of that, he took a lot of guilt upon himself. In order to justify his guilt, he would tell me what a lousy daughter I was, and he would physically beat me for no reason, and say that I deserved it. There was a wall between us that was a mile thick, and I didn't think that anything could get through it.

4) How did your father react when all of you met the Lord?

Well, my dad grew up with a lot of religion. We would share with him, but he would just say, "That's good for you, but I don't need it." He wouldn't allow us to talk about the Lord in front of him, or read the Bible when he was around, and he wouldn't let us go to any type of meetings. He was very strict with us and wouldn't even let us talk about it.

5) Was he strict with you in other ways?

My father was a very, very strict disciplinarian. He was what you would call a "white glove" father. He used to come around and inspect everything, and it had to be spotless. My dad used to come into my room any hour of the day, and he would take out a coin and flip it onto my bed. If the coin didn't bounce, I had to remake the bed, stripping it completely first before remaking it. That was a little overboard as far as I was concerned. But he was very strict and I was constantly under discipline. In high school, I had to be in by nine o'clock, and even then I was rarely allowed to go anywhere, even until I was 17 and 18 years old.

6) What was your feeling about this strict discipline?

I was never satisfied in doing it. I

never got any personal satisfaction out of the discipline I was under. Every time I would make the bed or do the dishes, it would be out of duty for my father.

You see, I was always disciplined to make them look good, and for *their* image as parents. People used to come to my parents and say, "Your kids are the most well-behaved, well-disciplined children I have ever seen." They wanted to keep it that way, so the minute we stepped out of line we were disciplined. But it never seemed to be because they loved us or for our benefit, but rather for their pride and their image as parents.

7) Did you rebel against your father during this time?

I was never too openly rebellious around my father, because I was scared to death of him. He was a big man, and he would just as soon knock you down as look at you, so a lot of my rebellion was *inside* rebellion. I used to take it out on my mother a lot, and scream and cuss at her, but I was never openly rebellious to my father. I was too afraid to be.

I think more than rebellion, I resented him making me go through the things I had to go through. At times my attitude was really bad, and when he would tell me to do something, I would say, "Yes, sir!" My attitude was rotten until God started to deal with me, and then He started to change my attitude.

8) How did God begin to deal with you?

I didn't know that the Lord would deal with me — I always figured He would change my father. I never thought He would start with me. I always felt like I was a little angel, and I did my best and took what the "mean old man" handed out to me. Really, I thought the Lord ought to change him first. But it didn't work that way. I would go to my Christian friends and say, "Hey, what's the matter with me? I don't feel the presence of the Lord," and they would say, "That's because of your rotten attitude."

When I started to realize that my rotten attitude was keeping me from feeling God's presence, I broke, because the Lord was everything that I lived for. When I realized that I was hurting the Lord by my attitude, that is when I broke.

9) Can you think of one particular situation that God used to change your attitude toward your dad?

The Lord was first in my life, and then came His people, the Church, because that is where I was accepted and treated with respect by people who felt the same as I did. There were various meetings that I wanted to go to because I wanted friendship and fulfillment. My father said that I couldn't go to any of these meetings. I resented that, because I lived for the meetings. I had nothing else. I went to school, I went to work, I came home, and that was my life at that time. I just couldn't see the sense in my father's restriction. There was no point to it as far as I was concerned.

My pastor would tell me, "You have to go home and submit to your father. He is the head of your household and, right or wrong, the Lord wants you to submit to him." I would go home, but when the meeting night would come, I would sit there just stewing because I knew that everyone was in a meeting and there I was sitting at home. When I finally realized that it was my attitude that the Lord was trying to change, I reached the point where I said, "Lord, I'm not going to be resentful because I'm sitting at home." After a while, it didn't even bother me that they were in a meeting because I knew that I was pleasing God, and that He was happy with me.

That really freaked my dad out, because before, I would totally ignore him and reject him on the nights that I had to stay home. Finally one night he came up to me and said, "Don't you want to go to those meetings anymore?" And I said, "Dad, I want to go now as much as I ever wanted to go to them, but it doesn't matter any more. A meeting doesn't make or break my life." When I came with that attitude

to him, he said, "Well, if you want to go to them, just go ahead and go." The attitude of my heart was what had to change first.

10) Was it always that easy, or were there times when you wanted to give up because things became so difficult?

Yes, definitely. There were so many times that I got so fed up that I packed my bags to leave, especially when I got to be around 16 or 17. I would say, "I've had it. I don't have to put up with all this." But I knew that God was requiring me to stay, even though I resented it.

It was hard for me to submit to my father and try to love him, because I couldn't respect him. All I could do was turn to the Lord and say, "Lord I love You, and I ask You to give me Your love for my father." That's all I could pray, and I prayed it over and over again. And the Lord answered my prayer. He just slowly started letting me see my father's heart, that a lot of the things he did weren't because he deliberately wanted to hurt us, but rather they were the result of a lot of insecurities and fears that he had within himself. God started to give me compassion for him.

A lot of my difficulty had to do with the image that I held up to him. When I would *think* of him as a dirty rotten bum, that would be my attitude toward him, and all that my heart saw in him. When I would go home and try to submit to him, all I could think was, "You dirty rotten bum." But when I would go home and say, "Lord, *You* have placed this man over me as the head of the household. Let me treat him like I would treat Jesus," and when I started holding up the image of my dad as lord of the household, I started giving him that respect.

As I started treating him like I respected him, even though the Lord had yet to work it in my heart, I saw him slowly changing in his attitude toward me and toward my family. As my brothers started doing this also, he started changing, because he saw that if we thought he was worth respecting, then maybe he could start respecting himself.

11) As you look back at the times that you submitted to your dad even though you didn't feel like doing it, what have you realized that God was teaching you through it?

I realize now that the reason my dad put me through a lot of submission tests was to see if I thought he was *worth* obeying. He would tell me to do something just to see if I would do it, to test my attitude toward him. It was like he was trying to break my will because my attitude was rotten. I would say, "Well, I'll do it, *but* . . ." As a result, he tried to break my will by continuing to put things in front of me until I would do it with the right attitude.

What he was really saying all that time was, "Won't you just love me. Won't you please just do things because you love me and not because you're scared of me or because I'm making you do it." But I never saw that. I never saw the cry of his heart when he put me through all those things. When I finally started praying and asking the Lord to let me see his heart, and my attitude changed, I started doing things because I loved him. From then on, when he would ask me to do something, I would get up and do it right away. I wouldn't give him the cold-shoulder treatment, but I just tried to keep the right attitude, and this amazed him.

I began to realize how important it was to begin to view my dad's true feelings from the Lord's perspective. My dad would often do little things for me, to show me that he cared, but he just didn't know how to express that. But I was so hung up in seeing his rotten side that I never saw the little things that he would try to do. I would just shrug them off, and that would hurt him all the more, because it took an awful lot for him to do them.

One time he brought me a plaque after one of his road trips, and it said, "Jesus Is Lord." But when he gave it to me, he just said, "Here, I got this for you," and he tossed it on the bed. Rather than seeing that he took the time to buy that for me because he

was thinking of me and because he loved me, I just saw his attitude when he gave it to me, and thought that he couldn't have cared less. I couldn't see behind his attitude to the fact that he bought it for me because he loved me.

When I started seeing, in the little things that he would do, *why* he did them — not *how* he did them — but *why*, it changed me and my attitude toward him. And then, when I accepted things from him, and thanked him and loved him for it, he wasn't so afraid to do something for me the next time, and he wasn't afraid of being rejected.

12) As your attitude has changed, has there been any change in your father as a result?

About a year ago, we asked him if he would go to church with us. He has gotten so tired of us asking him, that he said he would go one time and that was all — after that we were never to ask him again. He went to the Sunday morning service, and the pastor of our fellowship took an interest in him and invited him to a fellowship party that they were having that night. My dad went to the party, and I think he really felt the acceptance from all the people there. My dad said to me, "Maybe you have a point . . . it's not bad here." He was seeing love, and for the first time, he was seeing it as a reality and not as a fantasy. Our pastor came over a few times for dinner and talked to my dad, and he accepted the Lord, and came into the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and submitted himself to the Body. His life has been changing ever since.

He has been made a deacon in the church, and his life has done a 180 degree turn. Now he serves the Lord, and he prays, and he and my mother have become very close to each other. It's unreal what God has done.

13) Had you and your mother and your brothers been praying together for him?

My mother and I were close in certain areas, and we were close spiritually, because we had nobody but each other to depend on for a long

time. We used to get together with my brothers early in the morning for prayer, and we often mentioned my dad in prayer.

I can remember one particular time when my mother and I were praying with some Christian friends, and we really felt as if we had touched heaven. It was just a few months later that my dad got saved.

14) Do you regard your father as a different man now?

Totally. If you would have taken my dad two or three years ago and put him together with my dad now, and watched them, outside of looks, you would never know they were the same person. It's unreal. The way my dad reacts to situations now in his business is, "Well, let's pray about it," where before he would have said, "Let's go punch about it."

15) Was it hard for you to submit to your father even after he became a Christian?

First of all, I was involved in a cell group at the time my dad accepted the Lord, and the principle of authority was really coming into view at that time. We were always told that our first obligation was to the home, and that our first place of submission was in the home. So, regardless of what my cell leader told me, any major decision in my life ultimately had to be made under my father's counsel. My father had asked us to bring things to him first when we had a problem, and if he couldn't handle it, then we were allowed to take it to our cell leader. So I had to take any problem to my father first, which was hard a lot of times, because often I just wanted to bypass him and take it to my cell leader. But I would sit down with my mom, dad, and brothers, and discuss the problem with them.

There were many times that my dad really had the answer for my life, and it really surprised me, because there was still a part of me that wasn't sure whether he was quite spiritual enough to meet my needs. But he surprised me, and God really honored what he said many times.

16) Can you think of a specific incident where God honored the counsel your dad gave you?

There was one time when I was working at a store and I really hated it, because the boss there was always giving me a hard time. There was always a conflict between us, even though he liked me as a person. He knew I was a Christian, and that turned him off.

One specific incident concerned the 15-minute break we had where I worked. One day, I had told my boss 10 minutes prior to the break that I would be taking my full break that day, but I didn't say when I would be taking it. Because I had talked to him 10 minutes before break time, he misunderstood and thought that I had taken a 25 minute break, and I heard by word of mouth that my boss was really upset with me and had accused me of it.

So I went to my father and told him what had happened and how my boss would probably accuse me to my face, and he gave me the scripture about "agreeing quickly with your adversary." He advised me to go in and tell my boss exactly what had happened, and if he still accused me, to agree with him and submit to his authority without arguing.

As it turned out, the Lord redeemed the situation. When my boss confronted me the next day and accused me of taking a 25-minute break, I told him what had happened. But he refused to believe me and said that he had watched the clock and that I took 25 minutes. So I just told him that I wasn't lying to him, and didn't argue the point any further. It so happened that a girl who had been with me during the break went to my boss and confirmed that I had only taken 15 minutes. The boss came to me and apologized for his error, and that really floored me! God honored what my dad had said. If it would have been up to me, I would have just argued with my boss, but when I submitted to my father's advice in the situation, God worked it out.

(Continued on page 12)



The second in a series
of three articles on
"Personal Relationships"



BEING PROPERLY

RELATED

*Rooted in lordship;
maturing in fellowship.*

by John Poole

In the middle of a fragmented world, God is building a people. His purpose in apprehending us is to fit us together into one functioning body, and as we break out of conformity to the world and are placed in this body, God requires that we make certain adjustments in our thinking. One of the first necessary adjustments is in our understanding of Jesus' lordship. In discussing this, let us, by way of review, lay some scriptural groundwork.

First, Philippians 2:12-16:

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not

run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

Let's just repeat verse 15: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, *in the midst of* a crooked and perverse nation." Right in the middle of a crooked and perverse generation, God says his children will shine as lights in the world.

CHRIST JESUS THE LORD

Now, Colossians 2:6,7 says this:

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." I want to emphasize the last portion of this scripture in Colossians. One of the things that I have become aware of over the past few years is that basically you get what you preach. By teaching and preaching, you produce people that will be the replica of what they have been hearing. They become shaped and molded by what they have been taught. I discovered over a period of time that because of the way in which I was presenting the Gospel and the claims of Christ to people, there was being produced a kind of Christian that didn't relate to the Christian I read about in the Word. The converts that were being produced by my teaching and preaching didn't match up with the people I read about in the Scripture.

Then one day, this scripture stood out for me in capital letters: "As ye therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." I used to preach that you first came to know Jesus Christ as your Savior and then, after going through a sort of honeymoon experience, you would come to the crisis experience of dealing with the issue of whether He would really be your Lord. The discovery I made was this: *we have no right at all to lay claim to the saving benefits of Jesus Christ unless we have brought ourselves under His lordship.* There is no way in the world that a man can stand up and say that Jesus is his Savior unless he has fulfilled the first condition, which is: Jesus must be your Lord.

All of a sudden we had to make some significant changes. You see, it is possible to tell people what Jesus can do and get a response. But the fact that Jesus does something in your life is not where the issue of salvation stands and falls, even though He can do what no other can do. That is only part of the Gospel. You see, the good news of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ has come to reign.

Jesus Christ has come to reign! You

say, "Wonderful! In Jerusalem, in the millennium, right?" *No. . . in you!* It is no threat to me that Jesus will reign in Jerusalem. Where it becomes a little sticky is when he wants to reign in me. That is where I get a little up tight. The Gospel, the Good News, is that He wants to take over. Now, that may not sound like good news, but it is. The more I live life under His lordship, the more I understand why the message is "good news." I can now say, "Jesus, here it is. You take it over, Lord. This area of my life . . . I can't bring it under control, Jesus. Will you just minister to me right here?" *That is the Gospel of Good News.*

UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

Over and over again, I have proved out in my own life and in the lives of the people I have contact with, that it is possible to come to Jesus if you just want to *get*, and keep with you all the things that make you what you are. But you can't come to Jesus and receive Him as *Lord* and still hang onto the things that are in violation of His lordship. That is why we have people who claim to be Christians whose lives are a violation of what a Christian is supposed to be. I come to Christ but I hold on to my *materialism*. I come to Christ but I hang on to my *nationalism*. I come to Christ but I hold on to my *racism*. When you begin to face the issue of lordship you understand that if you want to receive His cleansing, His pardon, His forgiveness, there are certain conditions that must be met. *You don't go to the cross to negotiate, you go to the cross to surrender.*

When General Douglas MacArthur sailed into Tokyo Bay in 1945, he didn't say to the Japanese people, "Now, let's sit down and talk it over. What are you folks willing to give up?" He came in with terms for unconditional surrender. He said, "Now the war is over. We won. You lost. Here is what we want you to do. Now, sign on the dotted line."

I want you to know, brother, that the war is over. We are not here at the foot of the cross to negotiate: "God,

I'll serve you if you don't send me to the mission field." We are not here for negotiations — we are here for surrender.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him." The reason why most Christians don't walk in His lordship is that they never started out that way. Look at verse 7: "Having been firmly rooted." Salvation wasn't just something where you dropped the seed in and forgot about it. "Having been firmly rooted." You can walk in His lordship when you have been rooted and established in it from the time that the Gospel was first presented to you.

If you were presented with the matter of unconditional surrender, your roots are in lordship, and now you can begin to be built up. You cannot be built up until you have been firmly rooted. That is why some who are striving to grow don't grow. They want to be built up before they are firmly rooted, and the way you get firmly rooted is to understand that Jesus says, "I demand from you the total transfer of everything you are and you have over to my account. Only if you do that will I transfer to you the totality of all that I am and all that I have!" Unconditional surrender.

APPLIED TRUTH

Now, here is our first problem! General truth really doesn't cost us anything, and rarely are we hit when truth is generally spoken. For example, the things I have said so far are radical things. They could cost you your life. Really, they could mean the end of everything. I might as well be saying, "Who will volunteer for the firing squad?" because basically, we are talking about *dying*. We are talking about being crucified with Christ and dying to self. But general truth doesn't affect anybody. Truth has to be particularly applied before it really hits us.

When Paul starts out in chapter one of Ephesians, he says, "This Jesus God has raised up above all principalities, powers, might and dominion. He is to be head over all things to the church in Ephesus." When that was read in his

day, the people said, "Glory! Preach it, Paul!" Then in the second chapter, he talks about God making peace and forming one new man to be the representation of all that God is, and all the Ephesians said, "Keep talking, Paul!" In chapter 3, he said, the mystery of the revelation that has been hid in God before the world was, is being revealed now to the holy apostles and prophets, and they said, "This is tremendous! Preach on, Paul!" Then in chapter 4, he said that God has given prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the building up of the saints into the fullness of Christ, and all the Ephesians jumped up and said, "Preach on, Paul!" He gets on to chapter 5 and says, "Now I want you to know how we are going to apply this. Husbands, love your wives. Wives, submit to your husbands . . ." and they all said, "Let's go back to chapter one." Paul said, "This is how it's all going to work out. The children are going to obey their parents and the parents are going to get involved in the lives of their children. You workers, give the proper energy to your boss. And you bosses, pay your workers a fair wage." And somebody said, "How about chapter 3 again? Can I hear that one?" It is truth applied that hurts. It is truth applied particularly that gets us.

JOINED TO THE BODY

The second thing that I submit is that *even the regenerate man, the born-again man, cannot be trusted to apply the lordship of Jesus Christ to himself in the particular areas where God wants to deal with him.* One of the mistakes we have made is in our attitude that once a man has been born again he can be trusted by himself to become whatever God has destined him to be. That is contrary to the whole picture of salvation. Salvation is not only an individual being cleansed and made whole, but it is God picking up that regenerated person and setting him into the Body as it pleases Him. Remember, please, that when Paul talks about the Body, *he is not using an illustration, he is*

talking about a reality. He doesn't say, the Church is like a body. He says, the church *is* the Body of Christ. That means you will never find out what God has apprehended you for unless you are properly related to the people of God!

None of us can be trusted to apply the lordship of Jesus Christ to the particular areas of our lives where God is dealing. If you are honest, you will have to admit with me that all of us have areas about ourselves to which we are blind. Even the most honest of us about ourselves have areas that we are just totally unable to see. That is one of the reasons why God has caused us to be part of a body of people. We need the discipline of fellowship.

For most of us, our ability to live a life of obedience to the claims of Jesus Christ is limited by the blind spots that we have. So many of us, either because of lack of knowledge or down-right indifference, go on in areas of our lives so continually disobedient to the promptings of the Spirit that we are no longer even conscious of them. And we walk on with a false idea of our own spiritual maturity, because there is no one around to bring us face to face with the matter of obedience.

A good definition of living under the lordship of Jesus Christ is that *you have come to an end of living on your terms.*¹ From now on, you live on God's terms. The crunch comes that *I cannot do that alone.* God has to bring me into some kind of relationship where I can find the general truths of God's word particularly applied to me, either directly by the Holy Spirit, by the teaching of His word, or by some kind of close fellowship where I can be confronted with what I really am.

STIMULATING ONE ANOTHER

There are three scriptures that point this out. Let's turn first to Hebrews 10:23:

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: Not forsaking the assembling of our-

selves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Look also at Hebrews 3:12,13:

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

God is telling us that there needs to be in the Body of Christ a relationship whereby we can stimulate each other to love and good deeds and encourage one another so that we are not hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. And finally, Romans 15:14:

And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Here is a kind of relationship outlined by Paul that few if any Christians have really begun to enter into. Learn how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, encourage one another daily so that you are not hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Learn to admonish or *counsel* one another. *This is the normal kind of New Testament relationship that is described by the apostle Paul.*

Now I submit to you that God has ordained the Church of Jesus Christ and whatever local expressions it has to be the instrument through which you are to receive loving support and loving discipline. *This is not an option; it is a necessity for Christian maturity.* No matter who you are, you will never come to maturity alone because you were never destined to. You were never made to. There is something about the new creation that will remain in eternal immaturity alone. As a matter of fact, you can even make a scriptural case for the fact that you can't live as a Christian alone. If a member is cut off, it will die. We were destined to live in fellowship.

I also submit to you that this kind of relationship, stimulating one

another to love and good deeds, encouraging one another, admonishing one another, normally cannot be done in most of the kind of meetings that you and I attend. Most of our services are not geared for this kind of thing, and they are not supposed to be. Primarily, in a teaching kind of conference or a sharing conference, people are brought in to open the Word of God. But if that is all that you are exposed to, you can escape miraculously unharmed. In a large teaching or sharing conference, because of the numbers that are there and the lack of any personal application, you can, if you want to, escape untouched by human hands. "Praise the Lord, I got through another one! Whew!" But God has destined to bring us into some kind of relationship with people that is more intimate than that.

God is saying that no matter what you call it, somewhere His people have to come together in a *relationship* where we can begin, maybe for the first time in our lives, to really encourage one another.

When was the last time a Christian really took you aside with *specific* encouragement? Not general encouragement, because that does very little. "I praise the Lord for you, brother. Why? Well . . . uh . . . I just thought it would be a nice thing to say, that's all." Encouragement has to be specific. "Brother, I want to tell you that the way you endured when your wife was going through that difficult time of testing, and the way you stood with her, and the way I saw Jesus in you . . . I want you to know, that blessed me."

Unfortunately, most of us feel too estranged from one another to do that, simply because in this alienated society in which we live, all the pressures are to keep us apart. Satan keeps pushing people apart racially, geographically, and emotionally, but God is bringing people together.

Now, when we talk about God gathering his people together, we are talking about more than just having hundreds of people in the same room. We are talking about coming together so that somewhere I get the courage

and the faith to begin to let God lead me into a relationship with other persons. Only then can I begin to get to know in a specific way how to encourage them and help them along their Christian journey, just as they help me.

Let me tell you from the beginning, that is a little dangerous. But I don't know anything in God that is not risky. Is the baptism in the Holy Spirit risky? Of course it is. In anything, there is a risk involved; there are problems; there are difficulties. But there is no denying the fact that God is after this kind of relationships.

FIVE REASONS FOR RELATIONSHIP²

Let me give you five reasons why this kind of community, this kind of fellowship is needed. First, all of us as individuals have areas of weakness in our lives where we need to be encouraged to do what we know is right. There are men today that I share ministry with that, had it not been for them, we would not be accomplishing what God has been pleased to accomplish through us. When I face some decision regarding our fellowship and the direction we are to go, even if I know what is right, I need brothers at home to stand with me and encourage me to do the right thing. In the choices that you must make and things that you know you must do, you need the encouragement of people who know enough about you to support you and stand with you in your decision.

Secondly, every believer needs a place where he can share: a) his hopes and his dreams, and b) his fears and his doubts. What bothers me about a lot of Christians is that you can't share fears or doubts with them. If you ever walked up to them and said, "You know, there are times in my life when I really wonder if there is a God at all," their reply would be, "Brother, that's an unbelieving spirit. In the name of Jesus, come out right now!" I want to fellowship some place where I can walk in and say, "Listen, for the last two weeks I've been under such

temptation that I haven't been able to control the thoughts and the desires of my mind," and they won't turn me out or label me a backslider, but rather pray for me and help me.

I need a place where I can go and say, "Listen, this week, at home has been terrible. I don't know what it is. I know I love my wife and my wife loves me with all her heart, but something's been going on. We've just had a terrible time. And I've been so ornery with my kids! I don't know what it is. I know all the theories — how you're supposed to love them, take them in the room, sit them down, explain things to them. But it just doesn't work!" And I want some answer besides, "Well, glory to God, haven't you heard the latest series of tapes on family life?" I don't want that. I just want you to listen to me, that's all. I don't want advice. I already know the answer. Just listen, and let me cry a little bit.

Thirdly, we need this kind of community to help us discern the will of God. I want you to open your heart in honesty to God, as I share my heart with you right now. There are many times when I have great difficulty discerning between what are my own desires and what God's will is.

"Brother Poole, could you come to our conference on the 30th of October?"

"Well, what kind of a conference is it going to be?"

"Oh, not a very big conference, Brother Poole — only a few hundred people. But we really feel you ought to come."

"Well, drop me a note. I'll look to the Lord about it."

But the next day, another call comes. "Brother Poole, this is Brother so and so from . . . We've got a conference out here we would like you to come to. What kind? Well, about 15 churches are coming together, and we expect about 3,000 people."

"Man, I sure feel a leading to come to your conference! (I wonder what a love offering from 3,000 people would be.) Yes sir, brother, I can come . . . I just got the release in my spirit." I need the help of people that I am

committed to, to help me discern the will of God.

Number four, I need this kind of community or fellowship to correct my mistakes, to correct my errors, to adjust me. One of the most serious and difficult things is that we need one another so that we can correct one another. I know that can be mis-handled, but nevertheless, we need it. It is scriptural.

Lastly, we need a fellowship or company of people like this that can hear our confessions. "Confess your faults one to another that you may be healed" (James 5:16). You need a fellowship of people to whom you can confess. The wholeness that Jesus Christ wants to minister to us is going to come through the people that God has related us to. It is an amazing thing that when you are living with brethren that you are confessing your faults to, it is very difficult to become a stuffed shirt. The general public can see me preaching and ministering, and yet know nothing about me personally. But there is a group of guys back

home that know my down-sittings and my up-risings. They know my "ins and outs," and if I try to play stuffed shirt with them, they just pop my balloon. They can just say, "Come on, big shot — don't you remember when you were down on the carpet with your nose in the floor? Don't you remember?"

You need somebody that can keep you on a good even keel and continually remind you that if it weren't for the grace of God, you wouldn't be anything. You say, "Oh Brother, my sins are all under the blood. I don't want to talk about that." Listen, Paul himself used to remind himself, "I who before was a blasphemer, a murderer, injurious . . . in me God has first shown his grace and mercy that I might be an example to you" (1 Tim. 1:13,16). He constantly reminded himself that what he was, he was by God's grace. You need a fellowship that really knows you, just in case you get any inflated ideas about yourself.

If your response to the things I have said is, "That would be very nice, but

there is no place around where I live where that can happen," let me make two brief comments. First of all, make sure that you are not overlooking what God is leading you to. It doesn't take a whole lot of people for this kind of relationship; as a matter of fact, it can happen with just three or four people in the beginning. Just three or four. Secondly, if there is absolutely nothing, then you have every right to begin to pray on scriptural grounds that God will lead you to an individual, individuals, or couples where you can begin to establish some kind of honest time together; a time where your fellowship is not just talking about what God is doing around the world, but what God is doing right there in your own lives. Such fellowship and honest sharing is not an option, but a necessity if we are to come into true Christian maturity and become, individually and corporately, the people God has called us to be. ♡

¹ Earl Jabay, *The Kingdom of Self*, Logos International, 1974.

² Ibid.

THE WALL OF RESENTMENT

(continued from page 7)

17) How many people in your family know the Lord now after all this?

My dad is saved, my mother, my two brothers, and one of my stepsisters. My other stepsister is in Washington and we haven't had any contact with her. My aunt got saved the same day as my mother did. My mother came home the day that she met the Lord, and my grandmother said to her, "There's something different about you. What is it?" And my mother told her that she had accepted the Lord. So the next Sunday, my grandmother went to church for the first time in forty years. A few months later she had to go back into the hospital, and she accepted the Lord there in the hospital, and then she died two weeks later. But before she died, she led three other people to the Lord.

My mother just recently went back to Kansas to visit for a month, and while she was there, my uncle and

three of his four children accepted the Lord. My grandfather recently came to the Lord. Just seeing our family and how we have changed has been so much of a testimony that they just couldn't deny that something has happened.

18) Was the change in your father a gradual one or an immediate one?

Well, my mother and my brothers and I had been saved for three years, and we had been praying for my dad for that long before we saw any results. It wasn't one of those overnight things where we got saved and then he immediately came around. For three years, I walked through the discipline of submitting to him, and it took all that time for me to learn to love him, and for God to work it in me. It took three years from the time I got saved until he got saved and we could see the results of our prayers.

Even after he got saved, he didn't change into a different person overnight. He still had a lot of the same

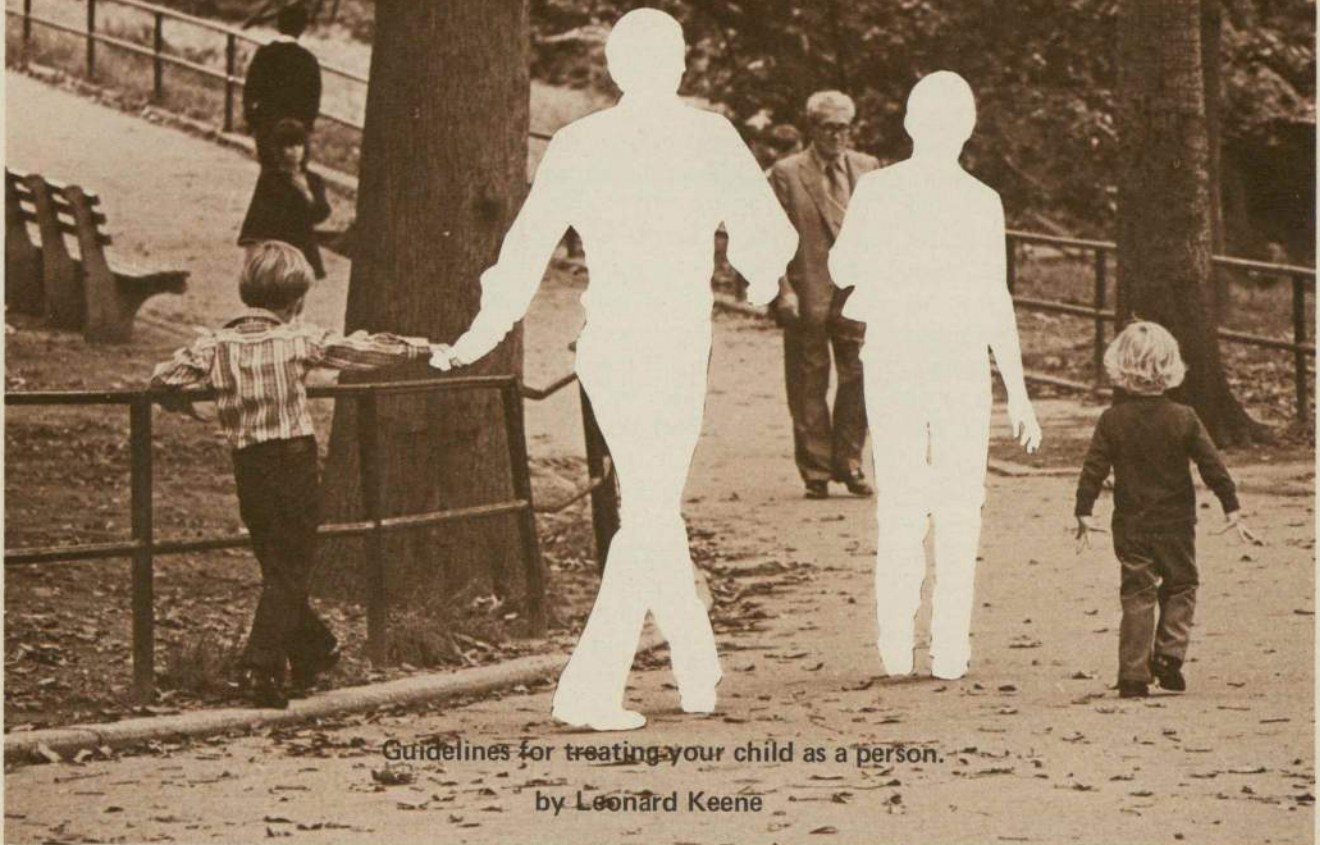
hang-ups and attitudes. There are still areas where it is hard for us to forget the past, although we don't dwell on those things. I'm not as free with him as I could have been if these things had never happened. But I love him as much as I can, and I know he loves me. It's a true love, and that is what's important.

There is real respect that I have for him now for the first time, and I can come together with him now and hug him, and I can say, "Dad, I love you," and mean it. We can laugh and joke together. For the first time there is an easiness that we have around each other that we never had before.

19) Did you give up hope a lot of times for your relationship with your father and for his salvation?

Yes. Many times I said, "God, it's never going to happen. This is one man that you cannot change." But I knew that someday, even if it took until I was 90 years old; *someday* God was going to touch him and change him. And He did. ♡

Where Have All The Parents Gone?



Guidelines for treating your child as a person.

by Leonard Keene

Please help our children" were the first words spoken by a young couple who came to me for counsel. "Our seven year old is rebellious and throws tantrums. Our one-month-old baby girl screams, vomits and can't sleep. The doctor has both of the children on medication which is nothing more than tranquilizers. Please tell us what we can do. We need help badly."

Where have all the parents gone? Many parents are still physically in the home and yet they are gone. This *mysterious absence* has caused severe problems for our children. Generally

speaking, a child's problem is really a parent problem. Even though the parent is bringing food, shelter and clothing home for the child and often spending time in the house there is still a *mysterious absence* of the parent.

The parent-child relationship is a *life transfer*. It is an exchange of the parents' knowledge, wisdom, experience, attitudes, emotions, conduct and goals *to the child*. This transfer is often accomplished without the parents realizing the consequences.

For instance, while repairing the family automobile John's wrench slips and tears the skin off his knuckle. A loud burst of anger with cursing

springs forth from his mouth. His seven-year-old son is nearby and observes his father's behavior. A few days later, during Christian fellowship at home, the son repeats these words of anger and vulgarity. The parents are shocked. John says, "Where did he get that filth? He must be keeping bad company. Honey, we'll have to watch his friends more carefully."

Parents, we must become aware of our importance in this *life transfer* to our children. The Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

To train means to show and to mold

the child. It is a *follow me process*: do as I do. Notice, there is a difference between teaching and training. If I only teach my child the "shoulds" and the "oughts" of life he may at some later time find a teaching that is more acceptable in his eyes. He may then reject my teaching and follow someone else's.

But training is a molding process. When I was in the army paratroops I spent three weeks in Jump School. The instructor both taught and trained me to jump out of the airplane. If I had only been taught, I might have been reluctant to step out of the open door into space. I would have stopped at the door and said something like, "Sir, let's talk about this a moment. Let's don't do anything hasty." But I was *trained* to be a paratrooper. An obedient soldier is one who has been shown "how" and "why" by his superiors. When it came time for me to jump out of the airplane the first time, I jumped. I didn't have to think about it. I was trained to jump. Parents, you should train your children by do-as-I-do; don't just teach them. As a parent or guardian we want to accomplish a *healthy life transfer* in our children. Observe the following ten areas carefully.

TEN AREAS TO DEVELOP EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

I. Establish Realistic Rules of Conduct

A rule to a child must be definite, easily understood and sensible. Our national and state legislatures spend hundreds of hours and many days formulating a law. They test its fairness and its clarity. They test the people's willingness to accept this new rule on the basis of good sense. Only then does the rule become law and is enforced.

We ought to give some of the same considerations to our children. Let them have a voice in the formation of the Rules of Conduct. Show them that some of the rules come directly out of the Bible.

I learned the importance of this principle while acting as legal counsel

for teenagers in trouble. These teenagers often had a bitter, resentful attitude toward their parents for making arbitrary and unreasonable rules on the spur of the moment — rules made by the parent without considering the child's needs and thinking. "It's unfair, my parents wouldn't listen to my point of view," they often declared.

Because of this, I determined to seek the Lord for an answer for our children who were then just infants. *Family Counsel* was a solution to this problem. We began to assemble weekly at the kitchen table for family counsel. As father I am the chairman. We all sit in a circle. We discuss rules, family finances, vacations and job allocations about the house. Problems that a child is having may be brought up at this meeting.

This method of communication with our children allows a freedom of expression without fear of a "put down" by the parent. Everyone is treated with respect and love. There is an openness about the meeting that allows a child to declare how he feels. I've heard my children say on occasion, "Dad, you are not spending enough time with us kids." or "Dad, aren't you being selfish about your sailboat." When I first heard this, I was amazed.

"Why do you feel I'm selfish and not spending enough time with you?" I asked. The children, with freedom and a sense of reverence toward me, began explaining their feelings. They were right. I had been too busy at work. I had deprived the family in order to purchase my sailboat. I changed my behavior. My children saw Dad's willingness to change. Later when I ask them to change their behavior they respond willingly. Remember, to accomplish the *life transfer* of fairness, mercy, teach-

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ability, forgiveness or such other good qualities we must train and show them these qualities in our own lives.

II. Speak Much Praise and Give Reward for Good Conduct

Some parents neither praise nor give reward for good behavior for fear the child may stop or get a "big head." Others are worried the child may not respect them. It is humbling to praise and reward a child. However, a humble parent is respected highly by the child.

As adults we are motivated toward good conduct by praise and reward in our jobs, play and even our spiritual life. God praises and rewards our obedience, so let us follow His example with our children. Children tend to get discouraged easily. Praise and reward and encourage a child to *keep trying*.

Avoid rewarding and giving praise for beauty ("you are prettier than our others") or intellect ("you are a born genius"). These two characteristics are not within the control of the child. When children see praise and reward given for beauty and intellect they will do one of three things:

(1) Become proud and arrogant over their own beauty or intellect. This hinders their ability to develop genuine friendships.

(2) Withdraw and not participate ("I'm not pretty, I'm not smart, so why try?")

(3) Change values to be loud in speech, dress and conduct to get attention.

Conduct is within the control of the child. A child can dress attractively, and I can praise by such comments as, "My, you have good taste." A child can work hard for scholastic achievements. I should praise him for his diligence, but not his intellect.

III. Enforce Rules Consistently, Fairly and Uniformly

The most frequent mistake made by parents is to be inconsistent in the enforcement of discipline. Inconsistency is simply enforcing a rule one day, and ignoring that same rule the next. Inconsistency breeds bitterness and resentment in the child. The child

is insecure, not knowing what to expect.

Suppose little John is misbehaving. Dad says, "John, straighten up or I'll spank you." John stops long enough for Dad to look elsewhere and then goes back to his misbehavior. Dad says, "John, this is the last time I'll warn you." John stops once more. As soon as Dad looks away he starts misbehaving again. Dad says, "John, for the last time . . ." On and on this may go until Dad either gets tired and leaves, or Dad gets so angry he attacks his son like a freight train. Whether John gets a spanking is determined by Dad's mood, and not by a consistent standard. It's like playing Russian roulette with a revolver. John never knows when the gun is going off. He thinks there's a bullet in the gun, but he's not sure when it will go off.

To avoid this problem, the *one warning rule* is recommended. The child receives one warning to correct his behavior. If he does not correct himself, the parent immediately corrects the child.

A child must be dealt with fairly to learn justice and mercy. Our daughter Joetta, at age two years, was playing in her bedroom with the neighbor girl, Betsy, age four years. I heard a suspicious giggle. Upon investigation I found black marks all along the walls of her room. There stood Joetta with a black crayola in hand and a silly grin on her face.

"Joetta! Did you do that?" I demanded.

"No, Daddy," she whimpered.

She had never lied to me before, so I searched for more evidence by asking Betsy. "Did Joetta do that?"

Betsy nodded her head in the affirmative.

That was all I needed. An eye witness is good proof on any legal issue. I knew all the elements of justice. There was no question Joetta was guilty. After all I was a lawyer, I've done police work, I've been in and out of court for several years, and I knew the look of guilt on a person's face. I decided to be trial judge, jury, district attorney and defense lawyer all in one. It took about four seconds to

have a trial and get a conviction. I grabbed her and began to vigorously execute the sentence on her bottom.

As she cried, Cloetta came running. (How many of you know that if a child cries the mother comes running?) She asked me quietly, "Why are you spanking Joetta?" I explained the evidence.

Cloetta replied with a soft tone, "She couldn't possibly have done it." She took little Joetta's hand and measured it to the black marks on the wall. Joetta's hand fell four inches short of reaching the marks. She was too short. About this time Betsy began to ease her way out of the room heading for home.

I thought to myself, "Oh, my goodness. . . I had wrongly convicted and punished Joetta. How should I handle it now? How could I make it up to her? Buy her a doll, a tricycle, or a toy?" No, I had injured her little spirit. Gifts do not heal injured spirits.

"The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?" (Proverbs 18:14).

With a strong spirit a person can sustain many problems. But with a wounded spirit the slightest problem (rudeness, criticism, coffee spills, late appointments and other such daily infirmities) in life becomes a mighty hurdle to cross. With a wounded spirit simple problems that otherwise would go unnoticed are now great obstacles. God showed me what to do about Joetta's injured spirit. I immediately dropped to my knees and repented.

"Joetta, will you forgive me? I wronged you baby. I'm sorry. Please forgive me." This was very humbling for a father, but it was very necessary.

There were still tears in her little eyes. She looked me straight in the eye and replied, "It's okay, Fod . . . I forgive you." (Fod was her short-term meaning for Father).

Her little spirit was healed. Six years later, Joetta has no recollection of this incident. If the injury had not been healed correctly with forgiveness, her behavior could show symptoms of rebellion and inability to sustain and deal with daily problems effectively.

Only two people can heal an injured spirit. The one who created the injury (Dad in this case) and the other and more important, our Lord Jesus.

If you know of such an injury in your child that you may have caused, please use forgiveness to heal the spirit. It could change the behavior of your child. Ask Jesus to help you heal these spiritual injuries.

IV. Immediate Corrections for Violations

"When Dad gets home you are going to get it!" A lengthy time lapse between the misbehavior and the correction is dangerous for three reasons.

(a) *Moral justification* — A child will begin to immediately justify his behavior. If enough time passes, he will be "innocent" in his own thinking at the time of the correction. The parent then becomes the wrongdoer and the child the innocent martyr who is wrongly punished.

(b) *Distorted recall* — A child forgets details and the parents' correction may be wrongly interpreted by the child. Remember, we are molding attitudes that will build the spirit and promote correct behavioral patterns.

(c) *Imposes a Fear Atmosphere* — Fear is torment. Continual fear destroys nerve cells and often results in hypertension, nervous breakdown and illness in children. I've seen children so upset they become physically ill and vomit because of fear and anxiety begun by the parent.

If little Jeff misbehaves, Mother may say, "You just wait until tonight when your Father gets home . . . Boy, you are going to get it then." Mother's thinking is if Jeff worries about tonight that will help teach him not to repeat his misbehavior. She is doing harm by using fear, guilt and anxiety to correct her child. Mother should immediately correct Jeff to clear Jeff's conscience, thus disposing of his fear and guilt.

V. Choose the Correct Method of Discipline

A parent develops hate, fear, insecurity and rebellion in a child

when he does *not correct* a child, uses *excessive correction* or *improperly corrects*.

"The rod and reproof give wisdom; but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Proverbs 29:15). "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest, yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul" (Proverbs 29:17).

Proper correction and discipline is an expression of love toward your child. Love your child enough to discipline him correctly. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs 13:24). How does a parent chasteneth him betimes?

The goal of all parent/child correction should produce three things: *obedience, respect, responsibility*. Let's examine several methods of correction and determine how these different methods mold the attitude of a child.

(1) *Loss of Fellowship* ("Go to your room") This method is to be avoided because a child develops a revenge spirit against the parent. As he sits alone in his room he thinks, "I'll get them one of these days." A child interprets this as rejection.

(2) *Public shame* (punish in the presence of friends) This method also is to be avoided. Humiliation and shame injures the spirit. It develops a rebellious and stubborn will in the child. The child will "bad mouth" the parent in an effort to recapture his public image.

(3) *Ridicule* ("You are dumb, you are stupid, you are lazy") This method of correction is the poorest of all, yet the most often used by parents. The child is struggling for a self-image that satisfies his basic needs of *identity, love* and *worth*. Ridicule gives him a defeated image of self. Ridicule does not satisfy his basic needs. Recently I asked Jeff, a 10-year-old neighbor boy, to join our ball game in the yard. His reply was, "I'd mess it up. I can't do anything right. You don't want me." Jeff had a poor self-image, probably fed by ridicule at home.

(4) *Loss of love of parent* ("Daddy and Mommy won't love you if you aren't good") This method of dis-

cipline is not acceptable. It teaches a child to use love as a weapon to manipulate people. A child who is manipulated by loss of love tends to use this same method when she or he becomes an adult to get their spouse to respond the way they wish. Real love is kind, endureth long, never seeks its own, and never faileth. (1 Cor. 13:4-8).

(5) *Loss of love of God* ("God doesn't like bad little boys") Desperate, parents may try anything to get a child to behave. *Don't* use this method. Teach your child that God always loves and forgives. Children are eager to please parents and God. *Don't* motivate good behavior by fear of hell or by casting guilt on the child.

While I was working as a traffic policeman several years ago, a lady ran out into the street to stop my patrol car. She was dragging a small boy behind her. Her first words to me were, "Officer, will you tell my son you will put him in jail if he doesn't obey his mother?" I looked at the small boy. He was terrified. My reply was, "Lady, we don't put five-year-olds in jail. You need to learn to love that little fellow. You set a good example with your own behavior." With a shocked look on her face she turned, and dragged the poor little fellow down the street.

(6) *Threats and yelling* ("If you don't straighten up I'll knock your head between your shoulders.") Threats designed to place fear in the heart of the child seldom work. Worst of all, threats such as this demonstrate to the child the immaturity of the parent. A child will seldom respect a parent who threatens and yells to correct.

(7) *Verbal reprimand* ("That's enough boys.") The one warning rule is very effective. A child needs to know what conduct is not acceptable and continuation of that conduct will bring immediate correction. When he understands these two things he will respond quickly to your one warning. When a child knows the boundaries he gains inner confidence from that knowledge.

I've heard the following statement by children hundreds of times. "I wish my

parents loved me enough to tell me No, and then back it up."

Children are not fools. Treat them as intelligent God-created human beings. Explain the "shoulds" and the "oughts" of life. What may be obvious and commonplace to you may not be known to them until you explain the facts, figures and consequences.

A parent who respects his child will find the reciprocal of mutual respect flowing back from the child. The child learns to "read your eyes" because he respects you and desires to follow your judgment and leadership. You are an important person. He is an important person. The child will strive to maintain a good flow in this relationship of parent/child.

(8) *Loss of privileges or rights* ("You can't ride your bike for two hours." "You must stay in the house for one hour." "You cannot go to the store for one day.") These are very useful and effective methods to mold and shape behavior and attitudes. The problem most of us have is we *over-punish*. "You are restricted for thirty days." This is not good. To a child you might as well have said a lifetime. You have made a federal case out of a city offense. Be merciful in your judgment. I often reduce the sentence if my child accepts the judgment gracefully.

Remember, it is the attitude we are forming. We are not trying to crush the child. We are developing a flow of love, respect and communication between parent and child that will last for years to come.

(9) *Loss of property* - If a child intentionally breaks a toy, the parent should remove that toy. He should be warned that abuse of property will result in loss of property. As a child learns to respect and care for his own property he learns to respect other people's belongings.

(10) *Spank on bottom with rod* - "He that spareth the rod hateth his son [child]" (Proverbs 13:24). Love and correction go hand in hand. "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15).

A rod is a stick or a switch. I believe there are at least two reasons God wants

us to use the rod and not our hand. It allows a parent time to "cool off" while he searches for the rod; and, the hand is used for gentle caressing, loving and guiding the child. It should not be used to hit or beat.

Some parents say, "But I'll hurt little Mary if I spank her with a rod." "Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge. Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" (Proverbs 23:12-14).

Parents who do not follow the one warning rule, but wait until they become angry to correct, are the cause of many of the "battered children" who are injured each year by their parents.

Open your Bible and show these verses to your child before you spank them (even if they are four years old and cannot read). Let them know that you would be disobeying God and injuring them by not spanking them for misbehavior after one warning.

My son Randy, age eleven, was overheard telling an eight-year-old girl who was on the floor throwing a tantrum: "Mari you better get up from there and go tell your parents to get a rod and beat that foolishness out of you, so your soul won't go to hell." In bewilderment, Mari stopped screaming, got up and left. Many Christian parents have not taken the time to look up the scriptures on discipline of children, much less show these scriptures to their children.

Have you ever watched parents when a child misbehaves? The father often just sits there in his chair totally uninterested, acting as though "that brat is not my child." The mother gets up and tries to correct the child. Mother is usually unsuccessful because she has no authority. The reason she does not have authority is because Father is shirking his responsibility of leadership in correction and discipline. Mother's words are only advice when Father does not take his position as the ruling parent. Father's role is to physically take charge of misbehavior of children. The husband is the ruler and leader.

Father, the next time your child misbehaves, you get up and take care of

the child. Let Mother be the one who sits in the chair. You'll find the child will not misbehave often and your wife will be more relaxed and easier to communicate with.

VI. Express Love Immediately After Correction

Let your child know you are not angry at him. Proper correction has removed the guilt from his spirit. Show him you too have forgiven him. Accept him back into the good graces of the family circle. Don't talk again about his former misbehavior. Correct discipline clears the conscience of the child and brings peace of mind. Many small children after a spanking have such a new peace of mind that they will fall into a deep, restful sleep. Peace and security at last!

VII. Express Love Regularly on Three Levels

A. Touch - Hold a child on your lap, wrestle with him, hug and kiss him. In counseling people who have problems as an adult, I often ask, "Can you remember your father or mother touching and loving you?" Most reply, "No."

B. Speak love - Julie age twelve years, had been caught again running away with two eighteen-year-old boys. Because I specialized as a lawyer in family relations, the Juvenile Court appointed me to represent Julie's interest. In conference I asked her: "Julie, why do you let those boys sexually abuse you?"

She paused a moment . . . and as tears began to stream down her face she replied softly, "Mr. Keene, at least they take me in their arms and say they love me."

I replied, "But they don't mean it, Julie. They really don't love you. They were only saying that to take advantage of you."

She thought for a moment and then said, "I know they didn't mean it . . . but at least they said I love you. I've never had anyone ever say that to me before."

I was choked. I couldn't hide my watering eyes. "Oh, Lord, help us love our children," I prayed.

Tell stories to your children. Discuss family affairs openly. Let your children become part of you, and you become part of them. When your son says, "Dad let's play checkers" don't put him off. Stop whatever you are doing (generally men are watching television ball games) and play with your son.

Tell your children the story of your romance - how you met and dated. The struggle in your early years will let them see you as people. My children still enjoy stories of the lean college years when we sharpened razor blades in a glass of water, heated only one room to save fuel, rode the motor scooter for adventure and slept in the automobile as we traveled.

C. Attitudes - We must develop attitudes of love and warmth. When you enter a house you can sense whether this attitude of love prevails. In many Christian homes this attitude of love is *absent*. When the husband and wife are not flowing together in love it will show in the children's behavior. If the parents are using the home for a refueling station *to get* rather than *to give*, children will discern these attitudes of selfishness. The attitude transplanted from parent to child takes place within the home. Are you selfish? Are you quick-tempered and intolerant? Are you a "getter" or a "giver"? Whatever you are tends to be transplanted to your child.

Attitudes of love are fruits of the Holy Spirit. Love is not a gift. Develop a freedom of giving and the Holy Spirit will provide the fruit of love in your home.

VIII. Provide Good Food, Exercise, Rest and Small Work Projects

Fatigue is a major cause of breakdown in the relationships with God, others and self. Fatigue and exhaustion produce a sense of indifference. A regular diet of hot dogs, hamburgers, potato chips, soft drinks, candy, white bread and other such convenient foods produce poor health and fatigue. Feed your family correctly with fresh fruits, meats, dark bread and regular balanced meals and you'll discover an improvement in the family relations. People will

get along better because they will feel better.

Encourage family exercise that will be fun such as hiking, bicycling, swimming, jogging, tennis, roller skating, bowling and other such things.

God rested after six days work. You must also rest. In fact, God is so concerned about fatigue and what it will do for breaking down relationships, he made it a commandment that you rest one day a week (see Exodus 20:8-10).

Small work projects allow a child to succeed and sense the feeling of accomplishment. When little George builds a dog house, he can mentally visualize himself constructing a large "people house" in the future. Small work projects help a child overcome fatigue and boredom.

IX. Limit Television, Radio, Comic Books and Fast Music

We do not have space to deal with this subject completely, except to say that when you limit a child in these areas, you must substitute other activities.

If you just limit and do not substitute you will have a bored and bitter child. Here are some of the things you might consider. A family night at the library, a day at the zoo, a family game and play night, or family story telling allowing the children to also express their stories. Try gardening, plant life, nature walks and hikes.

Most important of all substitutions is what we call "Super Saturday." This is the day when I take our daughter and spend all Saturday morning doing things we like to do together as father and daughter. She learns how to interact with her father. I learn how to relate to her. She has her father all to herself.

At the same time father and daughter are having "Super Saturday," my wife takes our son and they have "Super Saturday." The son learns how a woman thinks and acts. They are learning to relate to people on a one-to-one basis. The next "Super Saturday" we switch. I take our son and my wife takes our daughter.

"Super Saturday" about once each

month, is one of the most rewarding activities I could recommend starting at your house, to build open, free-flowing relationships between parent and child. You'll find yourself easily and without embarrassment discussing with your children such topics as God, Jesus, school, taxes, friends, sex, marriage, the Holy Spirit, children, parents and on and on.

X. Fathers, Provoke Not Your Children to Wrath: but Bring Them Up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

It is the father's responsibility to see that his children are brought up in the ways of the Lord. God revealed the seriousness of the father-duty of me one evening when He told me to picture myself at Judgment Day. So I did. This is how I saw it.

I'm standing before our Lord Jesus with a smile on my face, ready to receive a "Thank you, job well done" compliment and my many spiritual rewards.

But instead the Lord speaks, "Leonard, where is Randy?"

I reply, "Randy who?"

Without hesitation, the Lord says, "The son Randy I gave to you on earth. Where is he?"

I stuttered a bit . . . and answered, "Oh, Lord, you see it's like this. Randy got rebellious and got off on drugs. Actually, Lord, he ran away. But Lord, don't worry. I went right on with your work, saving souls and handing out tracts."

The Lord said, "Where is Randy? You are personally accountable to me for Randy's salvation. I gave you this son. You must account to me for his spiritual life."

I have since had a new awareness of my responsibility to God to teach and show my children the ways of the Lord. By the way, Randy was saved at age five years, called into the ministry at age eight, and baptized in the Holy Spirit at age nine. We are believing that Judgment Day will be different than I visualized.

Here are four areas you should consider in teaching your children the ways of the Lord.

(1) Teach and train by your *example*. As husband and wife do not envy and provoke one another. Instead love, give and forgive one another.

(2) Teach and train by your *leadership* in prayer, reading the Bible regularly, belonging to and attending church and by fulfilling promises to your family. You are no better than your word. If you break promises it is difficult for a child to believe that God would not also break promises. If Dad doesn't lie, it is possible to believe that God doesn't lie.

(3) Teach and train by *not condemning*. Don't pick at and harass your child, as he may become discouraged and give up. It's easy to kill the spirit and desire of a child to live. Build his spirit; don't tear it down.

(4) *Lead him to a personal commitment and encounter with Jesus*. Do not rely on your wife, the preacher, the Sunday school teacher or anyone else to introduce your child to salvation. Allowing the Holy Spirit to lead, *you* tell him about salvation. Tell him he can get God's love, nature, peace and eternal life, and ask him if he wants to accept Jesus as Savior and Lord of his life. If he says "Yes" have him repeat this prayer after you.

Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God; that you died for my sins; that you were raised from the dead. Jesus, right now I invite you into my spirit and my life as Lord and Savior. I renounce sin and Satan. I am sorry for my sins. Jesus, I accept you now as my Savior and as my new friend. Amen.

To sum it up, my advice is: Get your husband/wife relationship in order — the husband as head of the family and Jesus as head of the husband; make certain you are in a church body that has a good shepherd; study the Bible and allow the Holy Spirit to teach and apply His wisdom as you begin to flow in God's way; obey God's plan and you will see your parent/child relationship blossom into something beautiful. ♣

Adapted excerpts from a book soon to be released entitled "... and They Shall Not Enjoy Them" by Leonard Keene, copyrighted 1975, Balanced Life Association, Fort Worth, Texas.

ECHOES OF THE SPIRIT

Significant events in the Body of Christ.

Requests for prayer continue to come to our attention. Every section of our country is being touched by the effort to call our nation back to a platform of continual prayer remembrance in matters of gigantic proportions, as well as in the most seemingly insignificant areas. We must realize that the "small" merge into the overall. As we become "prayer conscious," needs will be revealed which have seldom come to the forefront. To help us see the scope of influence which we, as intercessors, are reaching, we present news and views from across our nation, asking not only our own constituents to join with us in rejoicing and availing prayer, but asking those of other nations to undergird our efforts.

World Hunger: People everywhere are joining concerns about existing conditions in this area. Conferences are called . . . plans projected . . . Prayer and fasting are among offered solutions.

Monthly day of prayer and fasting becoming a reality! A meeting is in the planning stages to call together many of the leaders of the Body of Christ in America, heads of denominations, Christian organizations, publications, Bible colleges and seminaries, etc., for the purpose of establishing and implementing a monthly day of prayer and fasting for the nation. Continue to trust God and pray for the establishment of this day.

President Ford Endorses Voluntary Prayer in Public Classrooms: The February "Great Commission Prayer Crusade" newsletter reports that President Ford has stated that, in his opinion, voluntary prayer in public

classrooms does not violate the Constitution. He has advocated an amendment to overrule Supreme Court rulings on prayer and Bible reading in public schools.

Latest Reports on the Equal Rights Amendment: Recently North Dakota ratified the E.R.A. as the 34th state to ratify. A total of 38 states is needed to ratify before E.R.A. legally becomes the 27th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Utah has defeated the amendment. E.R.A. was set back in Virginia when the proposal was returned to committee where members are fairly evenly divided. In Oklahoma, the State House of Representatives, for the third time in four years, voted it down, 51-45.

Earnest prayer is requested for voting in those states yet undecided on this issue. People might contact State Legislators informing them that ratification will invalidate any remaining authority that their state now has left to prohibit abortions. Consider that a mere *three* votes was the deciding factor in North Dakota!

Kanawah County, West Virginia: Parents continue the battle to remove anti-God, anti-moral, and anti-patriotic books from area schools. They have met with persecution and ridicule. Profanities, obscenities, disrespect for parents, dope, violence, intoxication, ungrammatical English, etc. have been clearly documented in the books. Let us back these crusaders with our prayers.

Washington, D.C.: The musical, *If My People*, had its U.S. premiere at the opening of the National Religious Broadcasters Convention early this

year. This new musical by Jimmy and Carol Owens, which uses a format similar to its predecessor, *Come Together*, sets forth the principles of the unity of the Body of Christ, praise and worship, intercession and spiritual warfare for the nation, and seeks to lead the people of God together into an experience of these principles.

Also from Washington: House of Representatives Resolution No. 646 and Senate Resolution No. 3657, both calling for an end to income tax deductions allowed for gifts to churches, missions, and Christian colleges after January 1, 1976, are currently under consideration in their respective branches of Congress. As the Spirit of God leads you to write your Congressmen, remember to give the number of the resolutions.

Berkeley, California: It has been announced by Christian World Liberation Front, that they are undertaking legal action against TM (Transcendental Meditation) in U.S. Federal Court to prove that the "Students International Meditation Society" is, in fact, religious in nature and not educational as they claim. This hopefully will bar "TM" from further use of public funds and facilities. It has been disclosed that State Legislatures of Illinois and Connecticut have passed resolutions urging that TM be taught in all public schools; and that the State of Michigan has incorporated the practice of TM into its publicly funded drug abuse program. Further, a special "meditation room" has been installed into the U.S. Pentagon to accommodate the growing numbers of officers that are practicing this sect of Hinduism. ♡

DISCIPLING YOUR OWN CHILDREN

The first calling
for parents
is to their family.

by Mrs. William Radcliffe

This article begins a monthly feature for New Wine in which one essay from those sent in by our readers will be published in each issue of the magazine. Selected from over fifty submitted articles, the following essay is a personal testimony on the theme of parent/child relationships.

They made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept" (Song of Sol. 1:6). Are you out winning the world to the neglect of your own family? I have yet to be shown the biblical principle for such action. Real discipleship requires spending time with those whom you are discipling. It does not mean teaching them a lot of concepts, but rather showing them the "how to's." What better place to begin than with your own family?

We have from the beginning of parenthood disciplined our children. We took them to the beach, on trips to interesting places; on picnics, on walks in the park, and hickory nut hunting in the woods. Our home was always the center of parties and gatherings, and it is still so after nineteen years. Our children knew everyone was welcome, and I remember our son, at seventeen, telling one of his classmates who was contemplating running away from home, to come to our house.

Hours were spent in the woods and by river banks with just father and son, hunting and fishing together. Today we have two expert hunters, and squirrel and rabbit in the freezer. Our daughter is taking a business

course in school, but she has learned to cook and do housework in preparation for being a homemaker.

Now the importance of all these things is: *building relationships*. When the important issues of life come up, it has been a natural course of action for them to come to us, not to someone else. You see, if you have never taken the time to sit down on the floor and play some childhood games with your children, then when the game of life happens, they don't come to you because they think you don't have the time.

We know couples who ran to meetings constantly and left their children at home with no supervision. The parents felt the Lord would take care of their children because they were seeking after spiritual things, but many sad problems arose because of neglect on their part. Psalm 127:3 says, "Children are a heritage of the Lord." You had better make certain you take care of that inheritance. You had better be careful how you present that heritage back to Him. No one else can do it better than you (no Sunday school teacher, no scout leader, no youth leader). God gave you those children so you would seek His face to obtain wisdom and knowledge in how to train them.

It is time mothers and fathers woke up to their *first* calling in God. There is no doubt in my mind that God's plan for today is families discipling families. Get your family in order. Those you touch, those your children touch will be brought into your home — not to be preached at — but to know and experience the love of God;

to see a living example of people knit together in love in a world that is falling apart.

There have been problems and dealings as we have grown together as a family. There were a few instances when, but for the grace of God, our teens could have been pulled by others into the evil one's path. With the school full of those on drugs and alcohol, the tempter is ever present. But we thank our God He taught us to enter into a rest in Him. As our two teens brought friends home, a real concern began to grow. Some of the kids were from broken homes, some drank, some had real problems. The Lord spoke to us through His Word in John 17:15 when Jesus said to His Father, "I pray not that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil," and thus, we committed our son and daughter into His Hand, trusting Him for their protection and keeping.

And so, some were won to the Lord through them, because they had learned how to reach out with love, not only to the lovely, but also to the unlovely. Our son even led a neighbor boy to the Lord, who, at the moment of receiving Christ had a complete healing of an incurable eye condition which would eventually bring blindness. This was verified by three specialists, one in New York City. He led another boy from a broken home to the Lord, and as a direct result, I led his mother to the Lord.

In this worldwide renewal which is taking place, there needs to come a settling down, an establishing, a learning to *live* what God has poured



JOYCE RADCLIFF, wife of William Sr., an analyzer at IBM, is the mother of two children ages 19 and 17. Their family is active in the First Baptist Church in Kingston, N.Y.

out. Our daughter is graduating from high school this year and will go into full-time employment. Our son graduated and is working as a draftsman. We feel they are a product of Christ in us, as well as Christ in them. The greatest contribution they can make is to be responsible people in the world, or they will never be a witness to anyone. One of the problems with the charismatic teens has been that many have not yet learned or been taught that one of the most spiritual things they can do is work eight hours a day. Paul said "If any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thess. 3:10).

I have given much practical advice — you might think to the neglect of spiritual. But there has been so much teaching and so many concepts that the balance has been lopsided. What God is really after is His life coming through, and He is the most balanced person there is. On the cross Jesus was concerned for his mother. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he said unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then said he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home" (John 19:26–27). He gave us the example; we are to truly care for our family. Paul said also in 1 Tim. 5:8 "But if any provide not for his own, and specially those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse

than an infidel." That includes every need — financial, physical, emotional.

A well-known Bible teacher stated that the Lord spoke to him one day and said, "You may travel all over the world with your briefcase and preach to thousands of people and have them flock to the altars when you finish, but if your home is not in order — in my eyes you are a failure."

Do you know what it means for a mother to disciple her children? It means to *be* there. I have talked to many women who are unhappy being a homemaker. Some want to go to work and entrust the care of their small children and even babies to others. Some want to return to college and finish their education. Can one truly do this and say that neglect of their *first* calling in God as wife and mother will not take place? If you have been active out in the business world all day, can you be full of patience for your husband and children when they come home from the office and school; will you feel like listening to their problems? One of my daughter's friends who is one of five girls, said that because her mother works, they have to have a temperature of 105° and be having convulsions

or they get pushed out the door to go to school. Now, I know this is somewhat exaggerated, but not too much. That mother cannot take care of what God has given her because she has a job to go to. Do you see what that parent-child relationship is being built on?

One of my dearest memories of my mother is her greeting me as I came in from school with cookies and milk or homemade bread just coming out of the oven. How lonely it must be for those coming home with no one to share their joys or heartaches of the day.

Do you know why children seek companionship in other places? Because they never found any at home. A former president of Wheaton College said that in looking back on the way he brought up his children, if he had it to do all over again, he would spend much more time with them in simple, non-religious activities. He said he found out that the things his grown children remembered most were the informal times of just being together.

Our children are now young adults. We have taught them much; they have taught us much. Together may we reach out with love and disciple many. ♥

ESSAY OF THE MONTH

We again invite our readers to submit articles on the theme of the month. One essay per theme will be selected by our editorial staff for publication.

The theme for July/August is "The Local Church." Deadline for receiving July/August manuscripts is May 2. The theme for September is "Serving." Deadline for September essays is June 20.

Essays should be written from the writer's own experience and observation and should be 1500 to 2000 words (or 4–6 typewritten, double-spaced pages). Please include a photograph and short biography of yourself.

Send all manuscripts to *New Wine* Essays, P.O. Box 22888, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315. If you wish to have your manuscript returned, enclose a self-addressed and stamped envelope.

All published material becomes the property of *New Wine*.

PARENTS, ACCEPT YOUR CHILDREN

Providing
love and supervision
without
legalism.

by Mrs. John
Manchester



This month, in addition to the essay of the month, we have decided to publish a second essay chosen from those submitted by our readers on the theme of parent/child relationships. Mrs. John Manchester, who wrote the following essay, is the mother of thirteen children, and resides in Santa Cruz, California.

Sometimes I think there ought to be a verse inserted before Ephesians 6:1: "Parents, accept your children." Then "Children, obey your parents." Maybe that would prevent parents from becoming legalistic.

Legalism is a tendency of the human way of thinking. It is very easy to slip into a legalistic attitude without being aware of it. As Christian parents, we need to be constantly on guard against this danger, because it is ruinous to a proper relationship between our children and us, and therefore ruinous to our children's happiness. Good communications, so essential in a family, are impossible where legalism prevails, for legalism brings fear and condemnation. Legalistic parents tend to regard their children as primarily "sinful" and "disobedient." Hurts, resentments, wounded spirits result. Barriers are erected that become higher and thicker as time goes by, until the bewildered parent exclaims bitterly, "How come my child is so rebellious? while the child is crying out, 'How come my parents don't love me?'"

I see two reasons for the development of legalism in us Christian parents. One is our zeal to "train our children in the way they should go" (Prov. 22:6). Doesn't the Bible say, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15)? We get the idea that to be proper Christian parents, we must rigidly supervise our children's actions, quick to correct their "foolishness," not only with the rod but with stern lectures on right and wrong. The more we tell our children what to do and what not to do, reinforced with liberal doses of "the rod," the better we are training them, and the more satisfied we are that we are fulfilling our parental obligations before the Lord.

The only trouble is — it doesn't work. We have misunderstood what Proverbs 22:6 is saying. We read it, "Train up a child in the way *we think* he should go." As a result, we are prone to impose our personal wishes and standards on him.

If we read the verse this way, "Train up a child in the way *he* should go," the emphasis is now on what is best for the child according to his own individual temperament and needs. We begin to try to understand our children before we react with displeasure to their "disobedience." What we have termed "foolishness" is often seen to be simply their immaturity, their attempts to learn, or their normal, childlike, happy nature.

We need to relax in our job of being parents. A little more "ceasing from our own works" (Heb. 4:10) and a little less trying to be the Holy Spirit Himself will do wonders. After all, how does God treat His children? We can go to Him freely when we have needs because we know He "upbraideth not" (James 1:5). He won't be quick to scold and criticize us. His guidance and reproofs are always done so gently and lovingly that we feel no resentment when He deals with us — not if we *want* to do right. And I think, basically, children want to please their parents. Often it is we who have turned them off.

A second factor in our legalistic attitude is our struggle to maintain Christian standards in a society that is increasingly non-Christian and permissive. This is quite a day in which to raise children. It's rough on parents, trying to handle the rapidly changing customs and standards of behavior. It's rough on the kids, too, facing a world full of urgent, insoluble problems. In the melee of turmoil, confusion and change, we parents are caught in a dilemma. How are we going to teach our children "the difference between clean and unclean, holy and profane" (Ezek. 44:23), unless we lay down the law and insist on some rules? (And there is a place for this. Please don't misunderstand. But it must be done in the right attitude.) *We* were never allowed to do thus-and-so when we were growing up. *We* know what is

"scriptural" and "right." We find it hard to accept the fact that our society has changed so rapidly that our children don't know anything to speak of about the way we used to do things. Customs of dress that appall us are all our children have ever known. Music that has a strong appeal to today's youth leaves us cold. We grew up believing that commercial amusements and school sports were "worldly" activities that Christian young people just did not participate in. We have struggled to hang on to the world we knew, and our children "don't buy it."

Neither did my children buy my legalistic attitude. Fourteen months ago I found myself trying to cope with a nine-year-old who didn't want me to touch him, didn't want me to say thank you when he did his chores, and who informed me, "I wish you'd just leave me alone"; with a thirteen-year-old who could hardly bring herself to talk to me and then only in monosyllables; and with a seventeen-year-old whose entire life spelled r-e-b-e-l-l-i-o-n.

Upon the recommendation of the school psychologist, I had made an appointment for counselling with the nine-year-old. But the day I was to go I cancelled the appointment. Couldn't I trust the Lord to help me? After all, He is called "Wonderful Counsellor" in Isaiah 9:6, and He has given us the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth (John 16:13). Surely God could give me better help than any man could. I committed the matter to Him.

God was faithful to help me, too, though not at all in the way I expected. He started with seventeen-year-old Jim . . .

One afternoon I entered the kitchen to find Jim, long-haired, school dropout, bitter, making a sandwich for himself and one of his long-haired friends. I noticed that the friend was wearing a nice winter jacket I had recently found in a closet and given to Jim's younger brother, Andy, to use. I resented the whole scene.

"How come Floyd is wearing Andy's coat?" I demanded.

"It's not Andy's coat. It's mine," Jim replied sullenly.

"You never wear it. So I gave it to Andy."

"It's still mine. I can do what I want with my clothes."

"If you were fulfilling your obligations here at home, it might be different. But you're not going to school and you're not working. So you've no right to give your clothes away . . . or to entertain your friends without permission. We can't afford it."

Jim threw his half-eaten sandwich across the kitchen. "Stop hassling me all the time!" he shouted wildly. Picking up the bread knife, he threw it in my direction. "I'm moving out!"

He did, too. He gathered up a few clothes and disappeared for several days. I surmised that he was staying at the neighbor's across the street, where Floyd, himself rejected by both parents, also stayed.

That evening, distressed and heavy in spirit, I went to a service conducted by a visiting evangelist. He started talking about rebellious children — what trouble they cause in a home, how they can even attack their parents. "There's a mother in the service tonight," he added, "who has been having real trouble with a rebellious son."

After the service I introduced myself as that mother and briefly told what had happened. The evangelist said to me, "Your boy needs to be *accepted* more than he needs to be disciplined."

"Accepted? But he's disrupting the home!" I protested.

"I know," he replied, "but he's behaving that way because he feels rejected, unloved and insecure. You need to show your son some love."

That was hard to take. I thought I'd been a pretty good mother. I loved my children. I had tried to train them in the ways of the Lord, and to live those ways myself. Where had I gone wrong? Here was this evangelist advising me to go to my son and apologize for the way I had treated him. Talk about eating humble pie! Lord, does this man know what he's talking about? Jesus assured me he did. I found myself actually looking forward to a

reconciliation. I found Jim at the neighbor's. I did not ask him to come home, only to forgive me.

"Will you stop hassling me?" he asked. I promised I would.

To my surprise, Jim moved back home that very same evening. Within a week's time he had surrendered his life to Jesus Christ and was a completely changed boy from then on. The love he shows to his parents now overwhelms me!

I took it from there with the nine-year-old. I realized I didn't have to tell him he really ought to play in Little League, or frown on him for not wanting to learn to play the piano, or point out to him how he should have used his spending money. When I stopped managing and concentrated on mothering, the family relaxed. And the day came when my young son said to me shyly, "I have something to tell you." He pulled me down to his level and whispered in my ear, "You're a good mommy!"

As to my teen-age daughter, God used a bikini bathing suit — and that's another story in itself — to show me that He's more concerned with inward attitudes than outward appearances. I'm not saying God doesn't care about outward behavior. He does. But He knows that the outward must be the product of the inward. If He has to choose, the inward attitudes of the heart get top priority any time.

A legalistic approach creates tensions. There's always a battle between what *you* think is right and what *I* think is right. But acceptance causes everyone to relax. Instead of a conflict of wills, there is a genuine appreciation for each other. A child who is fully accepted by his parents, just the way he is, is a secure child and therefore an obedient child (more or less!). It is remarkable how much less discipline is needed when acceptance is the order of the day.

Of course our heavenly Father is the model parent. As I mentioned already, He "upbraideth not" (James 1:5), or as the Living Bible words it, "does not resent" us. Instead we are "accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6). How wonderful! ♥

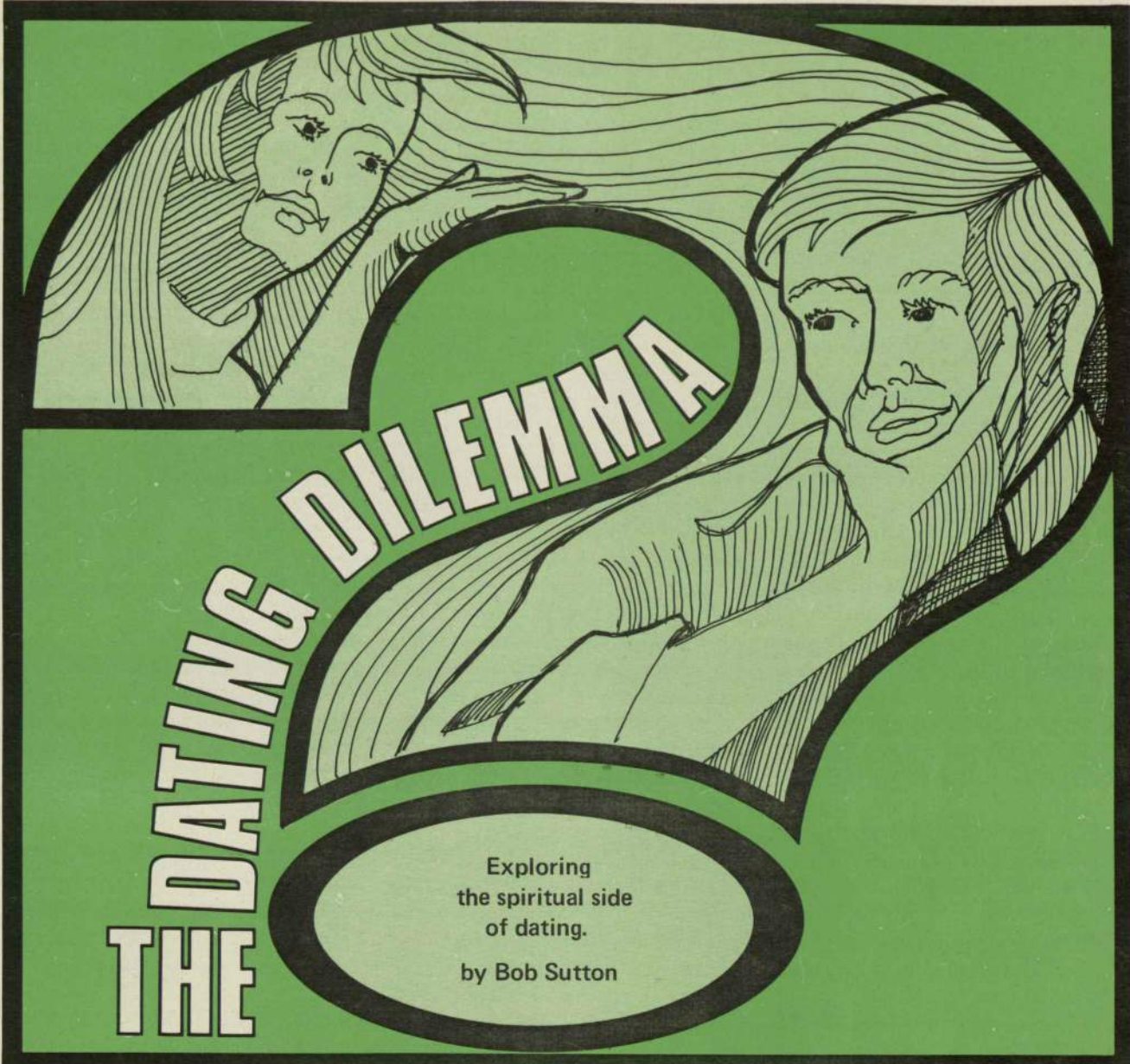
BIBLE STUDY

PARENTS AND CHILDREN

In the midst of a generation of parental indifference, runaway adolescents, permissive psychology, vacillating moral codes, and child abuse, the family unit cries out for explicit guidelines and concrete standards. No one volume on family life offers more optimistic promises or more reliable and workable principles than the Word of God.

(Bible Study answers are found on page 29.)

1. Psalm 127:3 makes two statements concerning the blessing of children. What are they? _____
2. List the following exhortations directed to children:
 - a. Prov. 4:1: _____
 - b. Prov. 6:20-21 (4 commands): _____
 - c. Eph. 6:1,2 (2 commands): _____
3. How does God regard the obedience of children? (Col. 3:20) _____
4. What two specific exhortations are given to fathers in Ephesians 6:4?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
5. According to Colossians 3:21, what happens to children when a father provokes them? _____
6. List the blessings and promises brought to children and parents as the result of obedience to God.
 - a. To obedient parents (Deut. 28:4): _____
 - b. To respectful children (Eph. 6:3) (2 promises): _____
 - c. To the man that fears the Lord (Ps. 112:2): _____
 - d. To the obedient woman (1 Tim. 2:15): _____
 - e. To the just man (Prov. 20:7): _____
 - f. To redeemed Israel (Is. 54:13) (2 promises): _____
7. List the curses connected with children and parents that are the result of disobedience to God.
 - a. To the woman (Gen. 3:16): _____
 - b. To the parents (Deut. 28:18 & 41) (2 curses): _____
 - c. To the children (Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Num. 14:18): _____
8. After the Lord gives His command for total obedience from the children of Israel, what does He instruct the parents to do? (Deut. 6:7). _____
9. What promise is attached to the instruction to "Train up a child in the way he should go" in Proverbs 22:6? _____
10. Read the story of Eli and his two sons in 1 Samuel 2:12-36, and answer these questions concerning Hophni and Phinehas:
 - a. What was their behavior like? (v. 17) _____
 - b. When Eli rebuked them for their deeds, did they repent? (v. 25) _____
 - c. Whom did the Lord judge and hold responsible for their behavior? (1 Sam. 3:12,13) _____
 - d. For what two mistakes did God judge him? (2:29) "and honourest _____" (3:13) "because his sons made themselves vile, and he _____"
11. In contrast to Eli's failure, what confidence did God express in Abraham's ability to raise a family? (Gen. 18:19) _____
12. What three things did Job do on behalf of his sons? (Job 1:5)
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
13. How frequently did he do this? (v. 5b) _____
14. In Proverbs 13:24, what parental attitude does *withholding* discipline express? _____ And *giving* correction or chastening? _____
15. What does the rod of correction accomplish?
 - a. Prov. 29:15: _____
 - b. Prov. 22:15: _____
16. What two instructions for correction are given in Proverbs 19:18?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
17. List the promised results of diligence in correcting our children.
 - Prov. 23:13,14 a. _____
 - b. _____
 - Prov. 29:17 c. _____
 - d. _____
18. When Jesus was a boy, what was his attitude toward his father and mother? (Luke 2:51) _____
 - a. As a result of his attitude, what took place in his life? (Luke 2:52) _____
19. What does God promise to accomplish between fathers and their children in the last days? (Mal. 4:6) _____



THE DATING DILEMMA

Exploring
the spiritual side
of dating.

by Bob Sutton

For centuries society was fairly rigid about dating protocol. Every young man or woman who reached courting age knew exactly what conduct was expected of them and what their socially accepted limits were. But with the freedom of the twentieth century, the upheaval in traditional moral standards, and the changing understanding of marriage and family, modern young people have been thrown into a moral and philosophical dilemma that their parents and grandparents never knew. Whereas society formerly dictated

what was acceptable dating behavior, now the responsibility for conduct is dumped squarely in the lap of the young people themselves.

This presents a particular problem to young people who have lived with a free dating and moral standard before coming to the Lord and seeking to walk in His Kingdom. Because they lack a clear standard of conduct in social and dating relationships, they often have difficulty in this area, which in turn impedes their entire Christian walk. Normally, the standard that they lack should come from the home, but in cases where the parents are unsaved, or a young person is living

away from home, this standard must come from the Body of Christ.

With the counsel and help of the Body of Christ, a young person can determine the pattern for relationships with members of the opposite sex that is best suited to his own walk with the Lord, and then live according to that standard. Such discipline will develop a responsibility and maturity in this area that will be invaluable to the young person approaching adulthood and marriage.

One of the difficulties in drawing any conclusions about dating is the broad spectrum of ages in which it is carried on. We cannot expect the same

freedom and responsibility to be granted a 16-year-old that would be given a 26-year-old living away from home. No set of "dating rules" can develop the responsibility and maturity that this area of relationships demands. Therefore, the emphasis of this article is not to lay down rules, but rather to explore some principles or guidelines which can be applied to the many varied situations which exist.

SOCIAL DATING

The term "dating" is a catch-all that covers a wide range of relationships all the way from casual time together between friends to pre-engagement. Somewhere between the age of twelve (younger in some areas) and sixteen, young people start "dating." They begin the social custom of having casual times to be together with members of the opposite sex. Other than the simple fact that this custom is a part of our society, there are three reasons generally offered for social or casual dating. First, for companionship with members of the opposite sex. Second, to learn to relate to members of the opposite sex. Third, to begin the process of selecting a mate.

Social or casual dating is different from what might be called "courting" or serious dating in that serious dating is usually limited to a single individual and carries with it some form of commitment, either to marriage or the consideration of marriage. Social dating is usually carried on with several individuals at one time, although exclusive relationships of going together, going steady and getting pinned do develop, usually for security or social status.

For the Christian seeking his or her full potential and happiness as an individual, it is very easy to be pressured into accepting dating as an inseparable part of reaching that fulfillment, simply because our society seems to regard dating that way. But seeking to walk in the Kingdom of God often forces us to change not only our conduct but our whole view of life. If indeed we Christians are an alien society under the rule of another

government, then we should not be surprised that the Sovereign of that Kingdom has ordained divine channels for fulfilling us individually and meeting the needs that the world seeks to meet by institutions such as dating.

As we look at the three reasons usually stated for social dating — companionship, learning to relate with members of the opposite sex, and mate selection — we find that God has provided for these three needs within the Body of Christ in such a way as to eliminate many of the pitfalls that accompany social dating.

Before going further, we must make it perfectly clear that this article is not meant to show that dating is "wrong" — Scripture never forbids it, either expressly or in principle. It is a matter which the individual must decide for himself. The purpose of this article, however, is to present an *alternative* to those who are looking for a satisfying way of developing proper relationship with members of the opposite sex.

The primary way in which a young person learns to relate to members of the opposite sex is in the home. Most warped understanding about sex and marriage can ultimately be traced back to a home where an unhealthy relationship existed between the parents. As a young person watches the way his parents relate to one another, and how the parent of the opposite sex relates to him, he learns the deepest and most lasting lessons on the meaning of sex relationships. A boy begins to understand what it is to be a man and how a man relates to a woman, not from dating or a sex education course, but by watching how his father relates to his mother. In the same manner, a girl will learn to relate to and view her relationship with men in the same way that her mother relates to and views her relationship with her husband. By the time a young person has started dating, he or she has already established, sometimes tragically, impressions of how to relate to members of the opposite sex.

Once these basic concepts have been developed, hopefully in a divinely-ordered home, entering and enjoying

relationships with members of the opposite sex can be most fully developed within the Body of Christ. Group situations eliminating the pressure and responsibility of solitary dates offer a freedom and covering for enjoying companionship with members of the opposite sex at whatever level is appropriate for the individual's age and maturity. Are we saying that a Christian should never go on a solitary date? Again, with no desire to dictate specific restrictions of conduct, we are seeking an alternative to what the world has established as the accepted way of relating to members of the opposite sex.

In the context of the Body of Christ, we see that within the normal routine of God's people being together in fellowship, in worship, in serving the community, in recreation, and in general everyday living, there are countless opportunities for single persons to interact with one another. The relationships that develop in this environment and context are distinctively marked with the stability, reality, honesty and covering that flow in the life of the Christian community.

MATE SELECTION

Among older singles, especially women, the matter of finding a mate can easily become a continuous preoccupation. During the latter part of a single girl's senior year of college she becomes susceptible to a rather common disease known as "senior fever." Faced with the imminence of being thrust into a world where potential husbands are harder to meet, she begins to feel the pressure to "find one before it is too late." Christians, not immune to this malady, often fall into a game of mentally sizing up every member of the opposite sex they meet: "Maybe this is the one God has for me." Often, dating becomes a means of "being available for God's leading," with an accompanying tendency to feel that the more dates one has, the better the chances of running into "the right one." This attitude represents a lack of trust in God's faithfulness to bring the one He

has chosen in the proper time. God brought Eve to Adam; He didn't hide her and make Adam beat the bushes to find her.

Many Christian young people are beating the bushes rather than doing what Adam was doing — being where God wanted him, and doing what God had told him to do — and trustfully waiting for God to bring along a mate when He knows the time is right. The Holy Spirit is the perfect matchmaker. He is also well aware of the pressures and problems unique to single life. Jesus was single, too. Within the relaxed atmosphere of a Christian fellowship or community, the Holy Spirit will be free to move and draw together whom He wishes, as young people come together, not with the idea of being paired off for marriage, but with the desire to serve the Lord and be used for His purposes.

THE LOVE TRAP

Many of the greatest heartbreaks and hazards of dating result from a misunderstanding of human make-up — its emotions and reactions. Somewhere our society developed the idea that the emotional experience of being “in love” is a sound basis for becoming serious about marriage. It is interesting to note that marriages in biblical times were based on less romantic foundations — politics, social status, economics, or convenience — and the divorce rate was substantially lower, as it still is today in most Eastern societies.

God's love, *agape*, begins with our will and ends with our emotions. Emotional love, *eros*, begins and centers in our feelings and tends to overrule our will. Being “in love” is usually *eros*, and although by definition this is sexual love, it is *not necessarily physical*. It is simply an expression of a deep desire to relate with a member of the opposite sex; a normal, healthy, and God-designed desire. However, it should not be misinterpreted as God's sanction on a relationship, or as the sole basis for marriage.

God has designed our wills, which

are to be subject to Him, to rule our intellects and our emotions. To allow our lives to be dictated by our emotions is to break divine order and invite deception and trouble. Emotions are God-given and to be enjoyed. More often than not, God's leading will be accompanied by the appropriate emotions — but they should *accompany* it, not overrule it.

Since God designed women as “feeling” beings as opposed to men, who tend to be more analytical, they are generally more susceptible to falling into the “love trap.” God made the woman to be a responder to the love and initiative of a man, and she will often have a difficult time finding the mind of the Lord in her dating relationships if she goes strictly on feelings. A woman will inevitably begin to respond to a man she dates and eventually “fall in love” *because God made her that way*. For a woman to date a man and say, “Lord, don't let my feelings get involved if this relationship isn't of You,” is like jumping off a cliff and saying, “Lord, don't let me hit the bottom.” A woman responding to a man she is spending time with is a natural law, like the law of gravity, and to use her feelings as a form of divine guidance is to court disaster.

Strong emotional feelings for another person can be caused by many things other than the drawing of the Holy Spirit. Here are five of the most common:

Someone showing affection to us. Again, it is a natural law (Luke 6:32,33). It is natural for us to respond to love shown by another.

Natural affinities. We like back-packing and classical music. Good times spent together in activities we enjoy tend to build feelings of closeness and warmth. Personality similarities tend to do the same thing.

Spiritual closeness and fellowship. This is extremely important! There is something in the human make-up that causes us to become very open and receptive when in a spiritual atmosphere (worship, prayer, or fellowship). Not understanding this, many people have misinterpreted the

closeness and bond they feel together in deep spiritual fellowship as a God-given bond of love for their special relationship. Many sad cases of adultery or illicit relationships have occurred when a man and woman began to pray and fellowship together, even though they started out with sincere motives and a pure heart. Because of the spiritual closeness they experience, they believe that God has put His heavenly seal on their relationship. For this reason, single people should be cautious about the amount of time they spend together alone in prolonged prayer and worship.

Sexual chemistry. Often the pressure of single life and the normal desire for physical sexual relationships can become the motivating force in a relationship.

Christians then, should allow God, by the Holy Spirit, to guide relationships, and not make decisions based on their emotions alone.

WHOM SHOULD WE DATE?

Paul stated very clearly in 2 Corinthians 6:14 that a Christian is not to be yoked together with a non-believer. Though most people try to apply this to marriage, a close examination of the passage reveals that marriage is not even remotely in the context of the passage. Being “yoked” is more likely to mean any relationship in which the non-believer can become a mixing or diluting influence upon our lives (1 Cor. 15:33). This consideration should be the first and most important criteria for judging any relationship — especially one that has the potential of emotional involvement.

Often the excuse is given, “If I go out with him, I will be able to witness to him and lead him to the Lord.” God *has* used dating situations to win many young people to Himself, but when there are better alternatives available, the Christian would be wise not to stretch his luck in prolonged dating of a non-believer! Often, what happens in such situations is that the non-believer becomes the leading member of the relationship and the

Christian ends up either backsliding in his relationship with the Lord or becoming frustrated and confused. Evangelization is best accomplished in a group situation, not on a date. If a person is really hungry for the Lord, he will be willing to come to a fellowship to find Him.

A college girl in her senior year used to tell her Christian friends about the man she was planning to marry: "I know he's accepted Christ deep in his heart. He just hasn't had the opportunity we have to learn about Him. After we're married I just know God will bring him along." Some years later, after continued frustration because her lukewarm husband again and again put a damper on her hunger to move deeper into God, she remarked to one of those same friends, "I wonder if I made a mistake."

Before entering a relationship with a member of the opposite sex, a few simple questions will help a Christian discern the spiritual benefits or hazards that might be waiting in that relationship.

First, is his/her commitment to the lordship of Christ the same as mine? This is not an effort to judge anyone's maturity or sincerity; but a Christian with a hunger for God and a desire to serve Him at all costs would be laying out a welcome mat to trouble if he got involved with someone who will never desire more than to warm the back pew of a church for the rest of his life.

Second, will our relationship cause us to grow spiritually? God has purposed our relationship to be in some manner a revelation of Himself. It should be obvious to us and to those who come in contact with us that there is something of the love and beauty of Christ that is revealed in our relationship in a way that could not be revealed through either of us as individuals.

Third, are we comfortable being open with our relationship before our parents or other mature Christians? To submit a relationship to the authority over us and ask for examination is a good test of whether or not God is in it.

These three safeguards will usually

narrow the field considerably, but that is what they are designed to do. They will help eliminate heartbreaks, blind alleys, and wasted time. And for a relationship that grows under these guidelines, there will be the freedom to be open and to enjoy each other without fear or apprehension. There will be the freedom to candidly discuss each other's feelings and grow in God's purpose together.

Young Christians should be especially strict with themselves in their dating relationships during the first year of their walk with the Lord. When young people come out of the world their spiritual fiber is broken down from living by a standard of ethics and conduct that is different than that of the Kingdom of God. Having been "programmed" to react and think by that standard makes it very difficult to suddenly "change gears" and begin to react and discern as a child of God. This is one reason immature Christians are so often deceived by different emotional experiences — they are reacting by an old set of standards.

To help overcome this, a period of strict discipline will help to write a new set of principles on their hearts, rebuilding the spiritual fiber to react and perceive according to God's pattern for relationships.

COVERING IN A RELATIONSHIP

Because of the ease with which feelings and emotions can be misinterpreted as forms of guidance, there is a need for covering in any serious dating relationship. This does not mean a chaperon who will scrutinize every move a couple makes, but rather a parent or shepherd who will be able to interpret what God is saying in that relationship. Especially for a Christian girl, there can be a great joy and comfort in knowing that she is not carrying the awesome burden alone of hearing from God to determine whether her dating relationships are according to His will.

A covering can be a protection and a blessing, not only in helping to hear from God, but also in helping to mold

the relationship. Many marriage problems are caused by situations that were not handled properly while the couple was dating. If during this time, when problems are less intense and the responsibility not as great, a couple can be shown how to function in their God-given roles toward each other, then many painful and frustrating situations can be avoided in their married life.

One of the unusual marriage situations that has begun to occur more frequently in recent years is the "we-knew-it-was-God-and-got-married-in-six-weeks" rush. The zeal that often arises during times when the Spirit of the Lord is working in their lives frequently causes young Christians to begin to get leadings about their relationships with each other, and in a moment of spiritual excitement, they jump into a quick marriage. Often there are tragic results, because they mistook a rush of spiritual zeal for the voice of the Lord, or they rushed their application of what God was saying and did in six weeks what God wanted done in a year. Too many young people have used quick marriage as an out for bad home situations, sexual problems, personal frustrations or the pressures of being single.

There are, of course, valid instances of God arranging and ordaining quick marriages. But most people fail to recognize two important factors usually present in most of these instances. First, both parties are usually fairly mature in their walk with God and have had some experience in knowing and discerning His voice. Secondly, they are usually a part of a body of believers who are also mature enough to discern the mind of the Lord in a situation. It is usually with this body's covering, agreement and blessing that the couple finally makes the decision to get married. One safeguard should always be kept uppermost in such situations: *If it is really God, it will wait!* If a couple has to wait six months or longer to be sure that they are hearing from God, it is a short investment to make in order to avoid years of pain

and regret because of a hasty decision.

SEX IN DATING

The big question in sex and dating is "how far, how soon?" Many young people who lived promiscuous lives before they came to the Lord find that, having been opened up in this area, it is particularly difficult to walk pure in their relationships with each other. God designed sex to be enjoyable and fulfilling when entered into in the protective bonds that He has established for it. It is a hard and fast law in Scripture, both expressly and by principle, that sex is to be experienced in marriage. We cannot go into a lengthy discussion, but a few scriptures where God speaks plainly on the subject should be sufficient: 1 Corinthians 6:9,13,15-20; 7:1-9,36,37; and Hebrews 13:4.

One would think that every Christian must be aware that sex is reserved for marriage, yet many couples who know better have been deceived into believing that God made an exception for their case, and thus they entered into sexual relations with tragic results.

For most people, however, the question is not one of whether or not to have sexual intercourse before marriage, but how far to go in necking and petting. Herbert J. Miles in his book, *Sexual Understanding Before Marriage*, defines necking as "kissing and embracing" and petting as "physical contact for the purpose of sexual stimulation." Many young people who would never dream of parking in a car someplace, engage in what one college worker called "the game of hands"; that is, having their hands every place it is "legal" under the guise of friendly squeezes and pats, yet with the underlying motive of sexual stimulation. The "brotherly" embracing of "sisters" in religious circles also begins to fall under the classification of petting when this is engaged in for the purpose of sexual stimulation.

For most couples the problem is a little deeper than friendly pats and squeezes. It often goes to the point of

deep petting and genital contact short of intercourse, with the couple honestly believing that they have maintained the scriptural command of not having sexual relations before marriage. Miles also points out in his book that petting is part of nature's plan for arousal which is designed to lead to intercourse. To engage in petting before marriage will produce many of the same emotional and spiritual effects as going all the way in intercourse. When a couple has entered into a process that is part of sexual intercourse, they have, as far as their psychological and spiritual beings are concerned, had intercourse. This, of course, is not to say that once a couple has been involved in heavy petting that they might as well go ahead and have intercourse because they have been there emotionally and psychologically. There is still a strong scriptural barrier around the act of sexual intercourse; and in itself, the act of intercourse has psychological, spiritual and emotional effects beyond that of petting.

There are five reasons why Christians should not get involved in petting before marriage:

First, it is part of a total sex plan that God ordained to be kept inside the marriage bonds.

Second, it usually tends to become a preoccupation that robs the Christian of the spiritual, emotional and intellectual growth that is needed in the relationship.

Third, it leads to guilt, spiritual drain, and frustration that makes living a victorious life in Christ almost impossible.

Fourth, it is dangerous. It is like lighting a fuse on a fire cracker and seeing how far you can let it burn before it goes off. A couple opens themselves to the possibility of going beyond their intended stopping point and having sexual intercourse.

Fifth, there is a loss of respect for each other that will dilute the relationship and generate problems, not only in the dating relationship, but later in marriage.

Some couples that are engaged or close to marriage deceive themselves by thinking that it is all right to go

ahead and begin having sexual relations. Quite frequently, however, this is the place where problems in their relationship start, since all five of the above problems will still be present, no matter how close the couple is to marriage.

The years prior to marriage when relationships are being formed with members of the opposite sex can either be some of the most enjoyable and spiritually fruitful, or some of the most frustrating and wasted years that one can experience. In the long run, it is a person's commitment to the lordship of Christ that will determine the degree of blessing, learning, and preparation that can be encountered in these significant years. ♣

BIBLE STUDY ANSWERS

1. Children are an heritage of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is his reward. 2. a. "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father"; b. Keep thy father's commandment; forsake not the law of thy mother; bind them continually upon thine heart; tie them about thy neck; c. Children, obey your parents in the Lord; Honour thy father and mother. 3. This is well-pleasing unto the Lord. 4. a. Provoke not your children to wrath; b. bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. 5. They get discouraged. 6. a. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body; b. It will be well with thee; thou mayest live long on the earth; c. His seed shall be mighty upon the earth; the generation of the upright shall be blessed; d. She shall be saved in childbearing; e. His children are blessed after him; f. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; great shall be the peace of thy children. 7. a. Pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children; b. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body; thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; c. Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. 8. Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. 9. When he is old, he will not depart from it. 10. a. Their sin was very great before the Lord; b. They hearkened not unto the voice of their father; c. Eli and his house; d. Thy sons above me; restrained them not; 11. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. . . ." 12. a. Sent and sanctified them; b. Rose up early in the morning; c. Offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all. 13. Thus did Job continually. 14. Hatred; love. 15. a. Gives wisdom; b. Drives foolishness from a child. 16. a. Chasten thy son while there is hope; b. Let not thy soul spare for his crying. 17. a. He shall not die; b. Thou shalt deliver his soul from hell; c. He shall give thee rest; d. He shall give delight to thy soul. 18. He was subject unto them; a. He increased in wisdom, and stature, and in favour with God and man. 19. "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers. . . ."

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

This month's answers by Bob Mumford.



How are Christian parents to keep their children from becoming worldly without being overly strict or protective? Should Christian parents attempt to enlighten and warn their children of the pitfalls of the world? Is it more advisable not to demand that they attend church and other Christian gatherings contrary to their will?



As most parents know by now, stock answers and methods do not seem to satisfy needs.

From my observation and experience I find that those most successful in bringing their children into God and walking in His ways have done so by creating what I might term "atmosphere." The atmosphere of love, understanding, and the joy of the Lord seems to go further in releasing teenagers to obedience and spiritual life than most other suggestions. When the parents are in unity (first miracle), and find themselves truly seeking to obey and grow in the Lord (second miracle), the children seem to absorb this by spiritual osmosis.

Teaching, warning and instruction in the ways of God *are* important. However, the *faith* that a parent must exercise as their child is vaccinated with the world and its values without contracting the disease of the world is significant. A child who is raised in a sterile environment — protected and shielded from the realities of life — succumbs more readily at age sixteen to eighteen than one who, by controlled exposure, understands and recognizes the false glamor of the world as well as the insanity of sin!

Concerning the issue of making them do things — especially attending meetings, etc., my advice (for what it

is worth) is one of using *discretionary authority*. There are occasions when it is best not to create a "showdown" or force the issue of "church attendance" as though it were equated with salvation. Discretionary authority means the parent or parents are forced to seek God and make Him their dependent source as to how and when they exercise their authority. Unyielding control over the children in issues that could possibly stand some latitude and understanding may result in trouble. Later, when more important issues arise and they must obey and do as they are told, there is greater response and less hassle. This, I believe, is the principle involved in Ephesians 6:4 "Fathers, do not irritate and provoke your children to anger — do not exasperate them to resentment. . . ." (Ampl.)



Is there an "age of accountability," and if so, when does a child enter it? What about children who die before they reach such an age?



"Age of accountability" is a term generated by necessity. Though it is not a scriptural term, it does describe the period when a child becomes aware of conscience, willful sin and the nature of disobedience.

This varies so greatly in actual experience that agewise the minimum could be four or five years. Traditionally it is thought to be about age twelve, based on Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:42).

The scriptural base for accountability is found in Romans 14:12 "So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God." When applied individually, it does not create too great a problem. When attempts are made to apply this to children,

nations, heathen or even groups of people, it becomes very complicated.

Roman Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran theology follows a different course, holding to a covenant relationship which involves infant baptism. This is based on the Baby Jesus' circumcision on the eighth day (Luke 2:21).

It is not possible to adequately answer to everyone's satisfaction the future and eternal state of children who die prior to a known commitment to the Lord. Personally, I take refuge in the omnipotence and justice of Almighty God. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?"



On what scriptural basis can a person be dismissed from a Spirit-filled body of believers; Who should make such a decision — the pastors or the body as a whole? What is the purpose of such a step? How exactly is it to be handled?



Church discipline has nearly disappeared in America in the 20th century. Restoration of New Testament truth will of necessity require restoration of New Testament discipline.

Matthew 18:15-17 simply and clearly enumerates the steps, the procedure, as well as who should make such an important decision.

First, the offending brother is confronted one to one. The person offended goes with the purpose in mind — "to win my brother." The complication arises in verse 16 — "If he will *not* hear. . . ."

This is always painful and should be understood as the cause of the fellowship being required to take step number two.

The second step is to take with you one or two more — not as a power

ANY QUESTIONS?


With this issue we begin a new feature entitled "Questions and Answers." Each month *New Wine* receives questions from our readers covering a variety of topics and issues. We feel that many of these questions are of concern to our readers, but because such miscellaneous and specific questions are not easily adapted to the framework of our regular articles and features, many questions our readers send in have gone unanswered. By providing this feature we are attempting to better meet the needs and desires of our readers. If you have questions for this feature send them to *New Wine* Questions and Answers, P.O. Box 22888, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33315.


group or spiritual strong-arm tactic, but as a sincere desire to discover and resolve the offense. Again, the basic problem is the brother's "neglect to hear. . ."

The third step is now unavoidable due to obstinacy. Even then the cry is made, "You don't have Christian love!" The fact is, love is required to face the erring man and through much pain, time and effort seek to "gain your brother."

If he refuses to hear the whole church, he is to be dismissed and treated like a heathen or publican. This is not done by one man arbitrarily but as a function of the whole Body in a given place. Remember, even now, the discipline and dismissal is designed to cause him to *hear*, repent and find a new relationship with the fellowship of believers.

If this process were more closely followed there would result a reclamation of many lives as well as a new joy and unity in the church itself.

 **How does one distinguish between an attack from the devil or chastening from the Lord?**

 Even the most mature saints I have known and read about experience difficulty in discerning which is: (1) the attack of the

devil, as: "I sought to come to you but Satan hindered. . ." in 1 Thesalonians 2:18, and (2) the clear chastening of the Lord as: Hebrews 12:6 "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. . ."

As I understand your question, it involves not the obvious attack of the devil or obvious chastening of the Lord as He seeks to break us; rather, it involves that grey area when we ask, "How can I know?"

Remember, the devil is subject to God. No one who believes the Scripture can seriously doubt God's overall sovereign purpose. When Christ met the devil and defeated him, He did actually bind the strong man (Matt. 12:28-29; Heb. 2:14). He then gave to us His name and His authority to do likewise (Matt. 28:18,19; Luke 9:1,2; Luke 10:9,19).

When a believer *understands* his place in Christ, the use of spiritual authority, and the reality of spiritual conflict, he can *usually* discern an attack of Satan because the Holy Spirit within rises to challenge and to overcome.

On the other hand, chastening of the Lord comes in many different packages. It behooves the child of God to seek the Lord for a mature discernment, to open the package carefully, and to embrace the lessons wholeheartedly with joy. This results in "the

peaceable fruit of righteousness"! The absence of peace and fruit may be a warning signal to alert us that we have received as discipline some unwelcome harassment of the enemy. We can then act accordingly.



What part does evangelism play in the cell concept? How do we arrive at 1 Corinthians 14:23 & 26, where the whole church in the city assembles? Is this to be a spontaneous occurrence or actively promoted by interested local leaders?



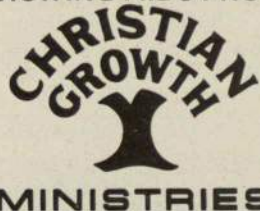
Examination of the church at Corinth reveals something like 60,000 believers (Coney, Bare & Hawson). It should be evident they did not have church buildings as we do, but "broke bread from house to house." These house meetings we call cells. With some modification they function as cells in the physical body. Reproduction, or evangelism, is most effective when accomplished in the matrix of cell group structure. People are not only won to the Lord, but are immediately placed in a situation for care, growth and discipline.

As the cells grow, they are taught to recognize they are *not* an independent unit, but part of a whole. This whole is described in 1 Corinthians 14:23 & 26. The whole Church which "comes together" is the cells, both large and small, coming for mutual submission, edification and contribution.

This vision is partly spontaneous, because I believe it to be the nature of the Church to *want* to be together, but unless the spiritual leadership has this common vision, the whole Body fulfillment of spiritual unity will be hindered. Local leaders can be either the source of unity or division. Artificial division and doctrinal emphasis often keep us from enjoying that which is so greatly needed — the whole Church coming together. ☞

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